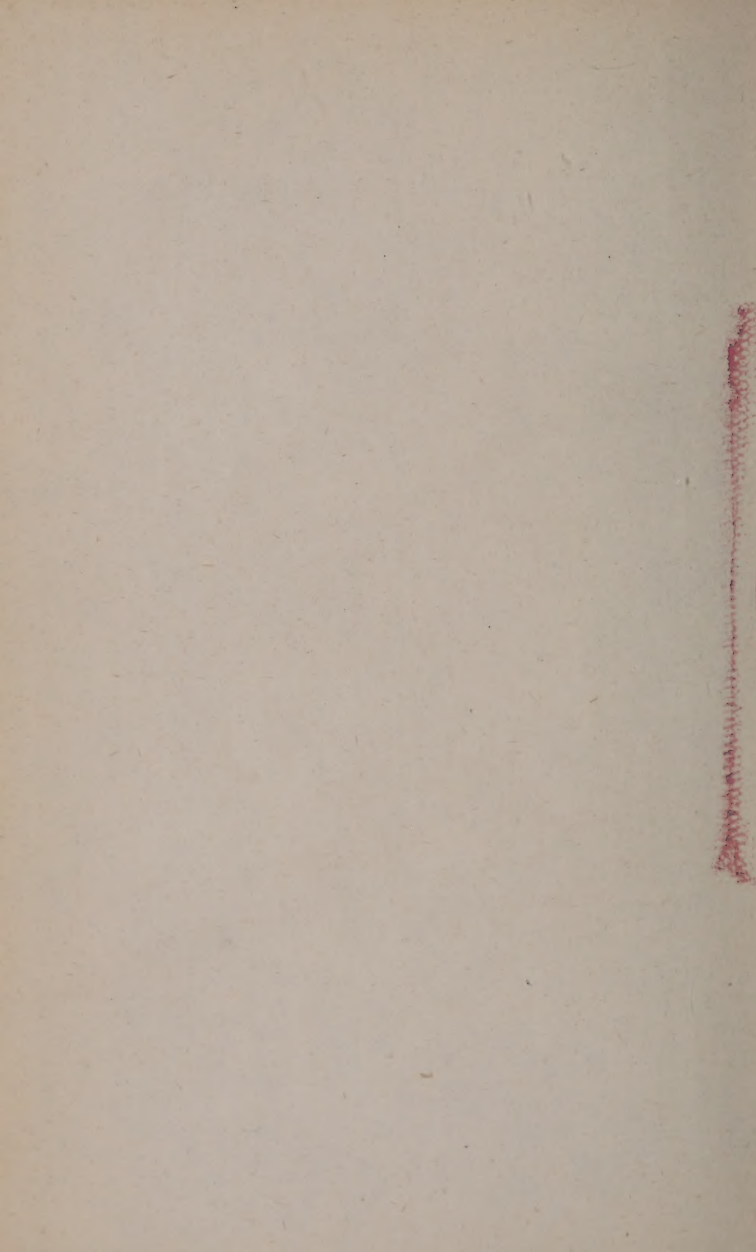




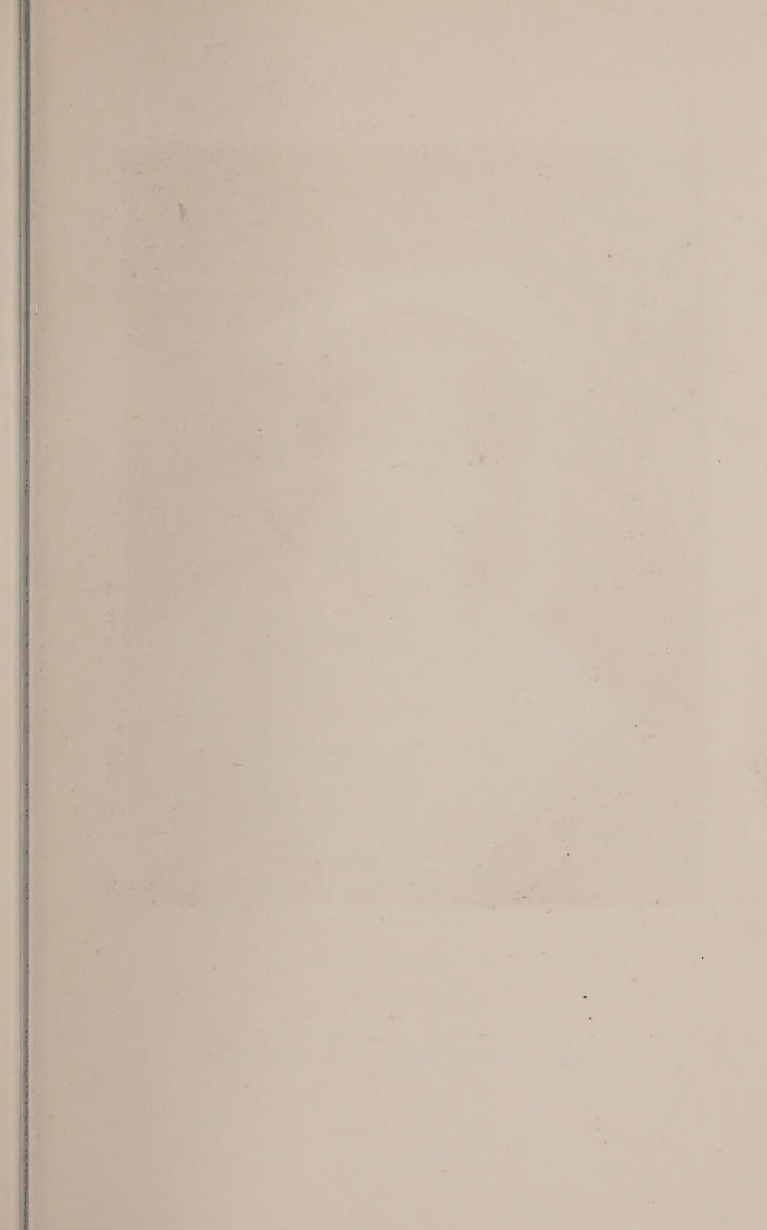














Painted by C. G. Thompson.

Eng<sup>d</sup> by Cha<sup>s</sup> Skinner.

*Sarah Helen Whitman*

# POEMS

BY

SARAH HELEN WHITMAN.



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## INTRODUCTION.

---

THE Nicholas Powers of three generations in Rhode Island traced their descent from Nicholas le Poer, whose castle of Don Isle was destroyed by Cromwell. The heroic defense of this castle by the baroness of Don Isle is the subject of a poem in the present volume. Sarah Helen Power, daughter of the last Nicholas Power, was born in Providence, Rhode Island, January 19, 1803, and died June 27, 1878. Marrying John W. Whitman, a lawyer of Boston, in 1828, she was left a widow by his death in 1833. Betrothed to Edgar Poe, in 1848, a few months before his death, the engagement was broken, on the eve of marriage, by the interference of friends. The early life of the poet was shadowed by the long absence of her father, and her later years were almost wholly devoted to a sister, left her in sacred charge by her mother. The poem, "In Memoriam," is the requiem of this sister. This poem, Mrs. Whitman's last, has all the intellectual vigor of youth, though written

at the age of seventy-five. The freshness of her spirit and the charm of her presence were not lost in the vicissitudes of a life of strange and romantic experience. No one ever associated with her the idea of age. She is represented as lying beautiful as a bride in death, her brown hair scarcely touched with gray.

The engraving in this book, from Thompson's picture, shows her in the most brilliant period of her life at thirty-five. The likeness is good after the lapse of forty years.

Mrs. Whitman's poems, to an unusual degree, illustrate the author's life. By her direction, the poems relating to Edgar Poe in this volume have been grouped together, though not placed under a separate head. To this group belong "Remembered Music," "Our Island of Dreams," "The last Flowers," "Song," "Withered Flowers," "The Phantom Voice," "Arcturus in October," "Resurgemus," the six "Sonnets To —," "Arcturus in April," and also "The Portrait," in the latter part of the volume.

In 1860 Mrs. Whitman published the little book, "Edgar Poe and his Critics," of which Curtis wrote, in "Harper's Weekly:" "In reading the exquisitely tender, subtle, sympathetic, and profoundly appreciative sketch of Edgar Poe, which has just been issued under this title, it is impossible not to remember the brave woman's arm, thrust

through the slide to serve as a bolt against the enemy." . . . . "The author, with an inexpressible grace, reserve, and tender, heroic charity, — having a right which no other person has to speak, — tells in a simple, transparent, and quiet strain, what she thinks of his career and genius." . . . . "In the delicate reticence of the book, — in its tone of inward music, as if the singer were humming a melody beneath the song she sings, — there is a pensive and peculiar charm. But it is not a eulogy. It is a criticism which is profound by the force of sympathy, and vigorous by its clear comprehension."

The present volume is the first collective publication of Mrs. Whitman's Poems. Twenty-five years ago a small book, entitled "Hours of Life, and other Poems, by Sarah Helen Whitman," was printed in Providence, containing about one half of the poems included in the present volume. The edition was small, and the circulation limited. But many of the poems had already become widely popular, and the book received a welcome, such as had been rarely accorded to any similar publication in this country, from the best judges of English and American literature.

George William Curtis wrote in "Putnam's Monthly:" "We have few collections of American verse so strongly individual as this; so permeated with that sincerity which instantly assures

the reader that he is not enjoying the distillation, through the poet, of another's experience, but tastes, at first hand, the honey-dew which has not fallen upon other pages. Such fresh and direct inspiration from nature, compelling the singer to express not only the sentiment inspired by the landscape, but to describe the landscape itself, with a success so remarkable that it is at once song and picture,—such pure and holy and feminine feeling for all changing aspects of nature and the year, as if the singer's heart were a harp so delicate that even chasing sun and shadow swept it into music, and yet a feeling entirely untainted with sentimentality,—such profound and solemnized passion, breathing through every word, as if the poet's life were consecrated to some sublime sorrow, which was, in the truest sense, 'sanctified,'—such affluence of extensive and rare cultivation, everywhere indicated and nowhere obtruded,—are not often discovered in any volume of poems, and never before in those of an American woman."

"In keen observation and delicate description of nature Mrs. Whitman resembles Bryant, except that there is a subtlety in her description as if it was derived less from observation of the spectacle and more from sympathy with the spirit. Hence her landscape painting has a glow, a tone, that we do not so deeply recognize in the other poet."

“The few translations from the French and German are among the best in English literature, and several of the sonnets addressed to an unknown are only to be matched by the passionate and superb Portuguese sonnets of Mrs. Browning.”

George Ripley wrote in the New York “Tribune” as follows: “The principal poem in this volume [Hours of Life] is remarkable for the life-like reality with which it weaves the recollections of a profound and intense experience into the natural materials of song. Here are all the usual elements of poetry,—a passionate love of nature, an imagination equally brilliant and plastic, a temperament keenly alive to all beautiful inspirations and influences, a taste ripened and enriched by exquisite culture, and a facility and charm of expression, uniting spontaneous grace and freshness with classical finish. But it is not these qualities that form the peculiar distinction of the volume before us. Rich as it is in characteristics that would establish an enviable poetical fame for any writer, the vein of thought and sentiment which it opens in its leading piece gives it a stamp of individuality, as a revelation of the inner life, which well-nigh eclipses the subordinate felicities of the volume.”

“Every reader will be struck with the delicacy of touch which Mrs. Whitman brings to the representation of nature. She has looked on the uni-

verse not merely with the artist's eye, but in the spirit of profound communion with its life, and with the passionate longing to wrest from it the solution of the 'eternal mystery.'"

It would be easy to multiply such tributes from the Magazines and Reviews of that day.

The poems in this volume were selected and partially revised for publication by Mrs. Whitman in the last year of her life. It will be observed that they contain occasional repetitions of sentiments, ideas, and favorite images, not only her own, but those of other poets. Mrs. Whitman regarded all true poetry as a contribution to the common language of poets, and often drew from this source without specially indicating it, except where, from unfamiliarity, the cultivated reader might fail to recognize the quotation.

Mrs. Whitman left the materials for a volume of her prose writings, and correspondence, largely autobiographical, to be published hereafter. This will include her "Edgar Poe and his Critics," and selections from her literary and personal correspondence of fifty years.

Notwithstanding the seclusion of Mrs. Whitman's life, few women had more friends. To these, everywhere, the present volume is inscribed.

POEMS.

"It cannot be unbound, my autumn sheaf: —  
Then let it stand, a relic of the past,  
Its mystery all its own, and it will last."

## POEMS.



### A STILL DAY IN AUTUMN.

I LOVE to wander through the woodlands  
hoary,

In the soft gloom of an autumnal day,  
When Summer gathers up her robes of glory,  
And, like a dream of beauty, glides away.

How through each loved, familiar path she  
lingers,

Serenely smiling through the golden mist,  
Tinting the wild grape with her dewy fingers,  
Till the cool emerald turns to amethyst ;

Kindling the faint stars of the hazel, shining  
To light the gloom of Autumn's mouldering  
halls ;

With hoary plumes the clematis entwining,  
Where, o'er the rock, her withered garland  
falls.

Warm lights are on the sleepy uplands wan-  
ing

Beneath dark clouds along the horizon  
rolled,

Till the slant sunbeams, through their fringes  
raining,

Bathe all the hills in melancholy gold.

The moist winds breathe of crispèd leaves and  
flowers,

In the damp hollows of the woodland sown,  
Mingling the freshness of autumnal showers  
With spicy airs from cedarn alleys blown.

Beside the brook and on the umbered meadow,  
Where yellow fern-tufts fleck the faded  
ground,

With folded lids beneath their palmy shadow,  
The gentian nods, in dewy slumbers bound.

Upon those soft, fringed lids the bee sits  
brooding,

Like a fond lover loath to say farewell ;  
Or, with shut wings, through silken folds in-  
truding,

Creeps near her heart his drowsy tale to  
tell.

The little birds upon the hill-side lonely  
Flit noiselessly along from spray to spray,  
Silent as a sweet, wandering thought, that  
only  
Shows its bright wings and softly glides  
away.

The scentless flowers, in the warm sunlight  
dreaming,  
Forget to breathe their fullness of delight ;  
And through the tranced woods soft airs are  
streaming,  
Still as the dew-fall of the summer night.

So, in my heart, a sweet, unwonted feeling  
Stirs, like the wind in ocean's hollow shell,  
Through all its secret chambers sadly stealing,  
Yet finds no words its mystic charm to tell.

1848.

## THE TRAILING ARBUTUS.

THERE's a flower that grows by the greenwood  
tree,

In its desolate beauty more dear to me  
Than all that bask in the noontide beam  
Through the long, bright summer by fount  
and stream.

Like a pure hope nursed beneath sorrow's  
wing,

Its timid buds from the cold moss spring ;  
Their delicate hues like the pink sea-shell,  
Or the shaded blush of the hyacinth's bell ;  
Their breath more sweet than the faint per-  
fume

That breathes from the bridal orange-bloom.  
It is not found by the garden wall,  
It wreathes no brow in the festal hall ;  
But it dwells in the depths of the shadowy  
wood,

And shines, like a star, in the solitude.  
Never did numbers its name prolong,

Ne'er hath it floated on wings of song ;  
Bard and minstrel have passed it by,  
And left it, in silence and shade, to die.  
But with joy to its cradle the wild bees come,  
And praise its beauty with drony hum ;  
And children love, in the season of spring,  
To watch for its earliest blossoming.

In the dewy morn of an April day,  
When the traveler lingers along the way ;  
When the sod is sprinkled with tender green  
Where rivulets water the earth, unseen ;  
When the floating fringe on the maple's crest  
Rivals the tulip's crimson vest,  
And the budding leaves of the birch-trees  
throw

A trembling shade on the turf below ;  
When my flower awakes from its dreamy rest,  
And yields its lips to the sweet southwest,  
Then, in those beautiful days of spring,  
With hearts as light as the wild bird's wing,  
Flinging their tasks and their toys aside,  
Gay little groups through the wood-paths  
glide,

Peeping and peering among the trees  
As they scent its breath on the passing breeze,  
Hunting about, among lichens gray

And the tangled mosses beside the way,  
Till they catch the glance of its quiet eye,  
Like light that breaks through a cloudy sky.

For me, sweet blossom, thy tendrils cling  
Round my heart of hearts as in childhood's  
spring ;

And thy breath, as it floats on the wandering  
air,

Wakes all the music of memory there.  
Thou recallest the time when, a fearless child,  
I roved all day through the wood-walks wild,  
Seeking thy blossoms by bank and brae,  
Wherever the snow-drifts had melted away.

Now as I linger, mid crowds alone,  
Haunted by echoes of music flown ;  
When the shadows deepen around my way,  
And the light of reason but leads astray ;  
When affections, nurtured with fondest care  
In the trusting heart, become traitors there ;  
When, weary of all that the world bestows,  
I turn to nature for calm repose,  
How fain my spirit, in some far glen,  
Would fold her wings mid thy flowers again !

### MOONRISE IN MAY.

LONG lights gleam o'er the western wold,  
Kindling the brown moss into gold ;  
The bright day fades into the blue  
Of the far hollows, dim with dew ;  
The breeze comes laden with perfume  
From many an orchard white with bloom,  
And all the mellow air is fraught  
With beauty beyond Fancy's thought.

Outspread beneath me, breathing balm  
Into the evening's golden calm,  
Lie trellised gardens, thickly sown  
With nodding lilacs, newly blown ;  
Borders with hyacinthus plumed,  
And beds with purple pansies gloomed ;  
Cold snow-drops, jonquils pale and prim,  
And flamy tulips, burning dim  
In the cool twilight, till they fold  
In sleep their oriflammes of gold.

With many a glimmering interchange  
Of moss and flowers and terraced range,  
The pleasant garden slopes away  
Into the gloom of shadows gray,  
Where, darkly green, the church-yard lies,  
With all its silent memories :  
There the first violets love to blow  
About the head-stones, leaning low ;  
There, from the golden willows, swing  
The first green garlands of the spring ;  
And the first bluebird builds her nest  
By the old belfry's umbered crest.

Beyond, where groups of stately trees,  
Waiting their vernal draperies,  
Stand outlined on the evening sky,  
The golden lakes of sunset lie ;  
With many-colored isles of light,  
Purple and pearl and chrysolite,  
And realms of cloud-land, floating far  
Beyond the horizon's dusky bar, —  
Now fading from the lurid bloom  
Of twilight to a silver gloom,  
As the fair moon's ascending beam  
Melts all things to a holy dream.

So fade the cloud-wreaths from my soul  
Beneath thy solemn, soft control,

Enchantress of the stormy seas,  
Priestess of Night's high mysteries !  
Thy ray can pale the north light's plume,  
And, where the throbbing stars illumine  
With their far-palpitating light  
The holy cloisters of the night,  
Thy presence can entrance their beams,  
And lull them to diviner dreams.  
To thee belong the silent spheres  
Of memory, — the enchanted years  
Of the dead Past, — the shrouded woes  
That sleep in sculptural repose.

Thy solemn light doth interfuse  
The magic world wherein I muse  
With something too divinely fair  
For earthly hope to harbor there ;  
A faith that reconciles the will  
Life's mystic sorrow to fulfill ;  
A benison of love that falls  
From the serene and silent halls  
Of night, till through the lonely room  
A heavenly odor seems to bloom,  
And lilies of eternal peace  
Glow through the moonlight's golden fleece.

## THE MORNING-GLORY.

WHEN the peach ripens to a rosy bloom,  
When purple grapes glow through the leafy  
    gloom  
Of trellised vines, bright wonder, thou dost  
    come,  
Cool as a star dropt from night's azure dome,  
To light the early morning, that doth break  
More softly beautiful for thy sweet sake.

Thy fleeting glory to my fancy seems  
Like the strange flowers we gather in our  
    dreams ;  
Hovering so lightly o'er the slender stem,  
Wearing so meekly the proud diadem  
Of penciled rays, that gave the name you bear  
Unblamed amid the flowers, from year to year.  
The tawny lily, flecked with jetty studs,  
Pard-like, and dropping through long, pendent  
    buds,

Her purple anthers ; nor the poppy, bowed  
In languid sleep, enfolding in a cloud  
Of drowsy odors her too fervid heart,  
Pierced by the day-god's barbed and burning  
dart ;

Nor the swart sunflower, her dark brows en-  
rolled

With their broad carcanets of living gold, —  
A captive princess, following the car  
Of her proud conqueror ; nor that sweet star,  
The evening primrose, pallid with strange  
dreams

Born of the wan moon's melancholy beams ;  
Nor any flower that doth its tendrils twine  
Around my memory, hath a charm like thine.  
Child of the morning, passionless and fair  
As some ethereal creature of the air,  
Waiting not for the bright lord of the hours  
To weary of thy bloom in sultry bowers ;  
Nor like the summer rose, that one by one,  
Yields her fair, fragrant petals to the sun,  
Faint with the envenomed sweetness of his  
smile,

That doth to lingering death her race beguile ;  
But, as some spirit of the air doth fade  
Into the light from its own essence rayed,  
So, Glory of the morning, fair and cold,

Soon in thy circling halo dost thou fold  
Thy virgin bloom, and from our vision hide  
That form too fair, on earth, unsullied to  
abide.<sup>1</sup>

1849.

<sup>1</sup> "The disk of the *Convolvulus*, after remaining expanded for a few hours, gathers itself up within the five star-like rays that intersect the corolla until it is entirely concealed from sight." — ST. PIERRE.

## WOOD-WALKS IN SPRING.

"Pleasure sits in the flower cups, and breathes itself out in fragrance."

RAHEL.

As the fabled stone into music woke  
When the morning sun o'er the marble broke,  
So wakes the heart from its stern repose,  
As, o'er brow and bosom, the spring wind  
blows ;

So it stirs and trembles, as each low sigh  
Of the breezy south comes murmuring by, —  
Murmuring by, like a voice of love,  
Wooing us forth amid flowers to rove ;  
Breathing of meadow-paths, thickly sown  
With pearls, from the blossoming fruit-trees  
blown,

And of banks that slope to the southern sky,  
Where languid violets love to lie.

No foliage droops o'er the wood-path now,  
No dark vines, swinging from bough to bough ;  
But a trembling shadow of silvery green  
Falls through the young leaf's tender screen,

Like the hue that borders the snow-drop's bell,  
Or lines the lid of an Indian shell ;  
And a fairy light, like the firefly's glow,  
Flickers and fades on the grass below.

There the pale anemone lifts her eye,  
To look at the clouds as they wander by ;  
Or lurks in the shade of a palmy fern,  
To gather fresh dews in her waxen urn.  
Where the moss lies thick on the brown  
earth's breast,

The shy little may-flower weaves her nest ;  
But the south wind blows o'er the fragrant  
loam,

And betrays the path to her woodland home.

Already the green-budding, birchen spray  
Winnows the balm from the breath of May ;  
And the aspen thrills to a low, sweet tone  
From the reedy bugle of Faunus blown.

In the tangled coppice, the dwarf-oak weaves  
Her fringe-like blossoms and crimson leaves ;  
The sallows their delicate buds unfold  
Into downy feathers bedropped with gold ;  
While, thick as stars in the midnight sky,  
In the dark, wet meadows the cowslips lie.

A love-tint flushes the wind-flower's cheek,  
Rich melodies gush from the violet's beak ;  
On the rifts of the rock the wild columbines  
grow,

Their heavy honey-cups bending low,  
As a heart which vague, sweet thoughts oppress

Droops with its burden of happiness.

There the waters drip from their moss-rimmed wells,  
With a sound like the tinkling of silver bells,  
Or fall, with a mellow and flute-like flow,  
Through the channeled clefts of the rock below.

Soft music gushes in every tone,  
And perfume in every breeze is blown ;  
The flower in fragrance, the bird in song,  
The glittering wave as it glides along, —  
All breathe the incense of boundless bliss,  
The eloquent music of happiness.  
Yet sad would the spring-time of Nature seem  
To the soul that wanders 'mid life's dark dream,

Its glory a meteor that sweeps the sky,  
A blossom that floats on the storm-wind by,  
If it woke no thought of that starry clime  
Beyond the desolate seas of Time ;  
If it nurtured no delicate flower, to blow  
On the hills where the palm and the amaranth grow.

## ON A STATUE OF DAVID.<sup>1</sup>

Ay, this is he ! the bold and gentle boy —  
That in lone pastures by the mountain's  
side  
Guarded his fold, and through the midnight  
sky  
Saw on the blast the God of battles ride ;  
Beheld his bannered armies on the height,  
And heard their clarion sound through all the  
stormy night.

Though his fair locks lie all unshorn, and bare  
To the bold toying of the mountain wind,  
A conscious glory haunts the o'ershadowing  
air,  
And waits, with glittering coil, his brows to  
bind,  
While his proud temples bend superbly down,  
As if they bore, e'en now, the burden of a  
crown.

<sup>1</sup> Suggested by a model executed by Thomas F. Hoppin, of Providence.

Though a stern sorrow slumbers in his eyes,  
As if his prophet glance foresaw the day  
When the dark waters o'er his soul should rise,  
And friends and lovers wander far away,  
Yet the graced impress of that floral mouth  
Breathes of love's golden dream and the voluptuous south.

Peerless in beauty as the prophet star,  
That in the dewy trances of the dawn,  
Floats o'er the solitary hills afar,  
And brings sweet tidings of the lingering  
morn ;  
Or, weary at the day-god's loitering wain,  
Strikes on the harp of light a soft, prelusive  
strain.

So his wild harp, with psaltery and shawm,  
Awoke the nations in thick darkness furled,  
While mystic winds from Gilead's groves of  
balm  
Wafted its sweet hosannas through the  
world ;  
So, when the day-spring from on high, he  
sang,  
With joy the ancient hills and lonely valleys  
rang.

Ay, this is he ! — the minstrel, prophet, king,  
Before whose arm princes and warriors sank ;  
Who dwelt beneath Jehovah's mighty wing,  
And from the " river of his pleasures " drank ;  
Or, through the rent pavilions of the storm,  
Beheld the cloud of fire that veiled his awful form.

And now he stands as when in Elah's vale,  
Where warriors set the battle in array,  
He met the Titan in his ponderous mail,  
Whose haughty challenge many a summer's day  
Rang through the border hills, while all the host  
Of faithless Israel heard, and trembled at his boast ;

Till the slight stripling from the mountain fold  
Stood, all unarmed, amid their sounding shields,  
And in his youth's first bloom, devoutly bold,  
Dared the grim champion of a thousand fields ;  
So stands he now, as in Jehovah's might  
Glorying, he met the foe and won the immortal fight.

## A NIGHT IN AUGUST.

"And thenceforth all that once was fair  
Grew fairer."

How softly comes the summer wind  
At evening o'er the hill,  
Forever murmuring of thee  
When busy crowds are still ;  
The way-side flowers seem to guess  
And whisper of my happiness.

The jasmine twines her snowy stars  
Into a fairer wreath ;  
The lily lifts her proud tíars  
More royally beneath ;  
The snow-drop with her fairy bells,  
In silver time, the story tells.

Through all the dusk and dewy hours,  
The banded stars above  
Are singing, in their airy towers,  
The melodies of love ;

And clouds of shadowy silver fly  
All night, like doves, athwart the sky.

Fair Dian lulls the throbbing stars  
    Into Elysian dreams ;  
And, rippling through my lattice bars,  
    Her brooding glory streams  
Around me, like the golden shower  
That rained through Danæ's guarded tower.

And when the waning moon doth glide  
    Into the valleys gray ;  
When, like the music of a dream,  
    The night-wind dies away ;  
When all the way-side flowers have furled  
Their wings, with morning dews impearled,

A low, bewildering melody  
    Seems murmuring in my ear, —  
Tones such as in the twilight wood  
    The aspen thrills to hear,  
When Faunus slumbers on the hill,  
And all the entrancèd boughs are still.

*August, 1848.*

TO ———.

EVA, thy beauty comes to me  
To solace and to save ;  
A marvel and a mystery,  
A beacon o'er the wave, —  
A star above the jasper sea,  
A hope beyond the grave.

Oft, when thy harp-tones wild and sweet  
The waves of passion move,  
Methinks pale Sappho's songs I hear  
Murmuring of Phaon's love, —  
Pale Sappho's passion songs I hear  
Lamenting her lost love.

But in those tender, thoughtful eyes,  
That look so far away,  
A pleading Pysche bids me rise  
To realms of purer day, —  
A Psyche soaring to the skies,  
To realms of perfect day.

## FLORALIE.

ALL the star-flowers on the hill  
Nod their sweet heads wearily ;  
Through the sad September day,  
To my lonely heart they say,  
Floralie is far away.

All the little birds that sang  
In the copse so cheerily,  
Fluttering from spray to spray,  
Seem in mournful notes to say,  
Floralie is far away — far away.

All the morning-stars that look  
Through the dawn so drearily,  
Turning from the joyless day,  
By their sadness seem to say,  
Floralie is far away, —  
Far away — far, far away.

## STANZAS WITH A BRIDAL RING.

THE young moon hides her virgin heart  
    Within a ring of gold ;  
So doth this little cycle all  
    My bosom's love enfold,  
And tell the tale that from my lips  
    Seems ever half untold ;  
Like the rich legend of the East,  
    That weaves and interweaves  
Its linkèd sweetness, or the rose  
    That hath a hundred leaves.

This little fairy talisman  
Shall love's serene Elysium span ;  
No hope shall pass its mystic round,  
And all within be holy ground :  
And here, as in the elfin ring  
    Where fairies dance by night,  
The green oases of the heart  
    Shall keep their verdure bright,  
And hope, within this magic round,  
    Still blossom in delight.

## THE GOLDEN BALL.

### A TALE OF FAERIE.

“ In olden dayes  
All was the land fulfilled of Faerie —  
The Elf Queen, with her jollie companie,  
Danced full oft in many a grassy mede.  
This was the old opinion, as I rede. —  
I speak of many hundred years ago —  
But now can no man see the Elvès mo.”

CHAUCER.

In the hushed and silken chamber  
Of my childhood, Eleanore,  
When the daylight's dying amber  
Faded on the dusky floor ;

When the village bells were ringing  
At the hour of evening prayer,  
And the little birds were winging  
Homeward through the dewy air,

Wooing me to twilight slumbers,  
In that soft and balmy clime,  
Often have I heard the numbers  
Of the ancient fairy-rhyme, —

Listened to the mythic stories  
Taught when fancy's charmed sway  
Filled with visionary glories  
All my childhood's golden day.

In the dull and drear December,  
Sitting by the hearth-light's gleam,  
Often do I still remember  
Tales that haunt me like a dream,

Often I recall the story  
Of the outcast child forlorn,  
Doomed to roam in forest hoary,  
From the step-dame's cruel scorn.

Long she wandered sad and lonely,  
Till the daylight's dying bloom  
Left one silver planet only  
Trembling through the twilight gloom.

Orphaned in this world of sorrow,  
Chased by savage beasts of prey ;  
Doomed, from frantic fears, to borrow  
Strength to bear her on her way.

Still she wandered, faint and weary,  
Through the forest wild and wide,

Till her thoughts grew dark and dreary,  
And her heart with terror died.

When a gracious fairy, wandering  
Forth to greet the evening star,  
Found her near a torrent, pondering  
How to pass its watery bar.

Tenderly the gentle stranger  
Led her to the foaming fall ;  
There, to guide her feet from danger,  
Down she flung a Golden Ball.

Shrined within its charmed hollow  
Many a mystic virtue lay ;  
Safely might her footsteps follow  
Wheresoe'er it led the way.

Throbb'd her heart with fear and wonder,  
As the magic globe of gold  
Onward through the rushing thunder  
Of the stormy torrent rolled :

On where boundless forests, burning,  
Scorched the air and scathed the sight,  
From earth's livid features turning  
Back the solemn pall of night :

Still on golden axis rolling,  
Onward, onward, still it sped, —  
Still the maid, her fears controlling,  
Fleetly following as it fled :

While the raging waters bore her  
Safely o'er their hollow way,  
And the flame-lights flashing o'er her  
Paled like stars at break of day, —

Paled before her virgin honor,  
Paled before her love and truth ;  
Savage natures, gazing on her,  
Turned to pity and to ruth.

So she passed through flood and forest, —  
Passed the ogre's yawning gate ;  
And when danger threatened sores  
Calmly trod the path of fate.

Till the night that seemed so dreary  
Grew more beautiful than day ;  
And her little feet, so weary,  
Glided gently on their way, —

Glided o'er the grassy meadows  
Steeped in perfume, starred with dew,

Glided 'neath the forest shadows  
Till the moonlight, slanting through,

Gleamed athwart a fountain sleeping  
Calmly in its hollow cells,  
Where were little fishes leaping  
All about the lily-bells.

Soon the lilies seemed to shiver,  
And a tremor shook the air —  
Curdled all the sleeping river —  
Woke the thunder in its lair !

Lo ! a fish from out the water  
Rising oped its rosy gills ;  
'T was the gracious fairy's daughter,  
And the air with music thrills,

As a sudden glory, bending  
O'er the fountain's mystic gleam,  
Changed her to a form transcending  
Fantasy's divinest dream.

Water blooms, with olive twining,  
Crowned a brow serenely sweet ;  
Robes, like woven lilies shining,  
Flowed in folds about her feet.

With a look of soft imploring,  
Thus she spoke, in rippling tones,  
Sweet as summer waters pouring  
Over reeds and pebble-stones :

“Thou hast conquered, little stranger !  
All thy bitter trials past,  
Safe, through sorrow and through danger,  
Thou hast won the goal at last.

“Lift me from the silent water,  
Let me on thy bosom lie ;  
For I am a fairy's daughter  
Thrallèd by cruel sorcery.

“Doomed beneath the wave forever,  
Like the virgin Truth, to dwell,  
Till a mortal hand shall sever,  
Link by link, the charmèd spell ;

“Till a faithful heart shall fold me  
To its home of truth and love, —  
So the ancient Fates have told me,  
And the answering stars approve.

“Lift me, then, from out the river,  
Now my charmèd life doth cease ;

Henceforth I am thine forever;  
Guard me, for my name is Peace.”

---

Thus, dear child, the mythic story  
Chimes to truth's unerring strain,  
As the moon, in softened glory,  
Sings the day-star's sweet refrain.

Thus, though step-dame Nature chide thee,  
And the snares of passion thrall,  
Unto heavenly Peace shall guide thee  
FAITH's unerring GOLDEN BALL.

## ON FANNIE'S CHARM LAMP.

WITHIN this little fairy urn  
No earthly naphthas blaze and burn ;  
But spells of necromantic power  
Lurk in the little silver flower :  
It is the very lamp, I ween,  
The wondrous lamp of Aladeen.

And he who did the gift impart  
To the fair regent of his heart,  
Through life his folly shall deplore,  
Slave of the lamp for evermore ;  
Slave to the lady and the queen  
Who holds the lamp of Aladeen.

## IN APRIL'S DIM AND SHOWERY NIGHTS.

IN April's dim and showery nights,  
When music melts along the air,  
And Memory wakens at the kiss  
Of wandering perfumes, faint and rare ;

Sweet, spring-time perfumes, such as won  
Proserpina from realms of gloom,  
To bathe her bright locks in the sun,  
Or bind them with the pansy's bloom ;

When light winds rift the fragrant bowers  
Where orchards shed their floral wreath,  
Strewing the turf with starry flowers,  
And dropping pearls at every breath ;

When, all night long, the boughs are stirred  
With fitful warblings from the nest,  
And the heart flutters, like a bird,  
With its sweet, passionless unrest ;

Oh ! then, beloved, I think on thee,  
And on that life, so strangely fair,  
Ere yet one cloud of memory  
Had gathered in hope's golden air.

I think on thee and thy lone grave  
On the green hill-side, far away ;  
I see the wilding flowers that wave  
Around thee, as the night winds sway.

And still, though only clouds remain  
On life's horizon, cold and drear,  
The dream of youth returns again  
With the sweet promise of the year.

*April, 1848.*

ON A MAGDALEN BY CARLO DOLCE.

THOUGH every line of that sweet, thoughtful  
face  
Seems touched by sorrow to a softer grace ;  
Though o'er thy cheek's young bloom a blight  
hath passed,  
And dimmed its pensive beauty, — from thine  
eye,  
With the soft gloom of gathering tears o'er-  
cast,  
Doth love shine forth, o'er all, triumphantly ;  
A light which shame nor sorrow could impair,  
Unquenched, undimmed, through years of lone  
despair.

O love, immortal love ! not all in vain  
The young heart wastes beneath life's weary  
chain,  
Filled with thy bright ideal, — whose excess  
Of beauty mocks our utter loneliness.

The weary bark, long tossing on the shore,  
Shall find its haven when the storm is o'er;  
The wandering bee its hive, the bird its nest,  
And the lone heart of love in heaven its home  
of rest.

## SUMMER'S CALL TO THE LITTLE ORPHAN.

“ Viens j'ai des fruits d'or, j'ai des roses ;  
J'en remplirai tes petits bras.”

VICTOR HUGO.

THE summer skies are darkly blue,  
The days are still and bright,  
And Evening trails her robes of gold  
Through the dim halls of Night.

Then, when the little orphan wakes,  
A low voice whispers, “ Come,  
And all day wander at thy will  
Beneath my azure dome.

“ Beneath my vaulted, azure dome,  
Through all my flowery lands,  
No higher than the lowly thatch  
The royal palace stands.

“ I'll fill thy little longing arms  
With fruits and wilding flowers ;

I'll tell thee tales of fairy-land  
In the long twilight hours."

The orphan hears that wooing voice ;  
Awhile he softly broods, —  
Then hastens down the sunny slopes,  
Into the twilight woods.

The waving branches murmur  
Strange secrets in his ear,  
But the nodding flowers welcome him,  
And whisper, "Never fear."

He sees the squirrel peeping  
From the coverts cool and dim,  
And the water-lilies sleeping  
Along the fountain's brim.

He hears the wild bee humming  
In the roses by the rill ;  
He nestles in the hollow tree,  
He clambers up the hill.

He weaves a little basket  
From the willow as he goes,  
And he heaps it up with blackberries,  
And blueberries, and sloes.

The brook stays him, at the crossing,  
 In its waters cool and sweet,  
 And the pebbles leap around him,  
 And frolic at his feet.

Half fearfully, half joyfully,  
 He treads the forest dim,  
 Till he hears the wood-birds chaunting  
 Their holy, sylvan hymn.

Then, in the cool of eventide,  
 The Father's voice he hears,  
 As men heard it in the Eden  
 Of Earth's paradisal years.

The redbird furls her shining wing,  
 The squirrel seeks his lair ;  
 The flowers, folding up their leaves,  
 Incline their heads in prayer.

The orphan feels a brooding calm  
 O'er all his senses creep ;  
 And, by the little ground-bird's nest,  
 He lays him down to sleep.

The Moon comes gliding through the trees,  
 And softly stoops to spread

Her dainty silver kirtle  
Upon his grassy bed.

The drowsy Night-wind murmuring  
Its quaint old tunes the while ;  
Till Morning wakes him with a song,  
And greets him with a smile.

LINES WRITTEN IN NOVEMBER.

FAREWELL the forest shade, the twilight grove,  
The turfy path with fern and flowers inwove,  
Where through long summer days I wandered  
far,

Till warned of Evening by her folding star.  
No more I linger by the fountain's play,  
Where arching boughs shut out the sultry  
ray,

Making at noontide hours a dewy gloom  
O'er the moist marge, where weeds and wild  
flowers bloom ;

Till, from the western sun, a glancing flood  
Of arrowy radiance filled the twilight wood,  
Glinting athwart each leafy, verdant fold,  
And flecking all the turf with drops of gold.

Sweet sang the wild bird on the waving bough  
Where cold November winds are wailing now ;  
The chirp of insects on the sunny lea,  
And the low, drowsy bugle of the bee,

Are silent all ; closed is their vesper lay,  
Borne by the breeze of Autumn far away.  
Yet still the withered heath I love to rove,  
The bare, brown meadow, and the leafless  
grove ;

Still love to tread the bleak hill's rocky side,  
Where nodding asters wave in purple pride,  
Or, from its summit, listen to the flow  
Of the dark waters, booming far below.  
Still through the tangling, pathless copse I  
stray,

Where sere and rustling leaves obstruct the  
way,

To find the last, pale blossom of the year,  
That strangely blooms when all is dark and  
drear ;

The wild witch-hazel, fraught with mystic  
power

To ban or bless, as sorcery rules the hour.  
Then, homeward wending, through the dusky  
vale,

Where winding rills their evening damps ex-  
hale,

Pause by the dark pool, in whose sleeping wave  
Pale Dian loves her golden locks to lave ;  
As when she stole upon Endymion's rest,  
And his young dreams with heavenly beauty  
blest.

And thou, "stern ruler of the inverted year,"  
Cold, cheerless Winter, hath thy wild career  
No sweet, peculiar pleasures for the heart,  
That can ideal worth to rudest forms impart?  
When, through thy long, dark nights, cold  
sleet and rain

Patter and plash against the frosty pane,  
Warm curtained from the storm, I love to lie,  
Wakeful, and listening to the lullaby  
Of fitful winds, that as they rise and fall  
Send hollow murmurs through the echoing hall.

Oft, by the blazing hearth at even-tide,  
I love to see the fitful shadows glide,  
In flickering motion, o'er the illumined wall,  
Till slumber's honey-dew my senses thrall;  
Then, while in dreamy consciousness, I lie  
'Twixt sleep and waking, fairy fantasy  
Culls, from the golden past, a treasured store,  
And weaves a dream so sweet, hope could not  
ask for more.

In the cold splendor of a frosty night,  
When blazing stars burn with intenser light  
Through the blue vault of heaven; when the  
keen air  
Sculptures in bolder lines the uplands bare;  
When sleeps the shrouded earth, in solemn  
trance,

Beneath the wan moon's melancholy glance ;  
I love to mark earth's sister planets rise,  
And in pale beauty tread the midnight skies ;  
Where, like lone pilgrims, constant as the  
    night,

They fill their dark urns from the fount of light.

I love the Borealis flames that fly,  
Fitful and wild, athwart the northern sky ;  
The storied constellations, like a page  
Fraught with the wonders of a former age,  
Where monsters grim, gorgons, and hydras  
    rise,

And " gods and heroes blaze along the skies."

Thus Nature's music, various as the hour,  
Solemn or sweet, hath ever mystic power  
Still to preserve the unperverted heart  
Awake to love and beauty ; to impart  
Treasures of thought and feeling, pure and  
    deep,  
That aid the doubting soul its heavenward  
    course to keep.

## EVENING ON THE BANKS OF THE MOSHASSUCK.

"Now to the sessions of sweet, silent thought,  
I summon up remembrance of things past."

SHAKESPEARE'S *Sonnets*.

AGAIN September's golden day,  
Serenely still, intensely bright,  
Fades on the umbered hills away,  
And melts into the coming night.  
Again Moshassuck's silver tide  
Reflects each green herb on its side,  
Each tasseled wreath and tangling vine,  
Whose tendrils o'er its margin twine.

And standing on its velvet shore,  
Where yester-night, with thee, I stood,  
I trace its devious course once more,  
Far winding on, through vale and wood :  
Now glimmering through yon golden mist,  
By the last, glinting sunbeams kissed ;  
Now lost, where lengthening shadows fall  
From hazel copse and moss-fringed wall.

Near where yon rocks the stream inurn,  
The lonely gentian blossoms still ;  
Still wave the star-flower and the fern  
O'er the soft outline of the hill ;  
While, far aloft, where pine-trees throw  
Their shade athwart the sunset glow,  
Thin vapors cloud the illumined air,  
And parting daylight lingers there.

But ah, no longer thou art near,  
This varied loveliness to see ;  
And I, though fondly lingering here,  
To-night, can only think on thee.  
The flowers thy gentle hand caressed  
Still lie unwithered on my breast ;  
And still thy footsteps print the shore,  
Where thou and I may rove no more.

Again I hear the murmuring fall  
Of water from some distant dell ;  
The beetle's hum, the cricket's call,  
And, far away, that evening bell.  
Again, again, those sounds I hear ;  
But oh, how desolate and drear  
They seem to-night ! how like a knell  
The music of that evening bell !

Again the new moon in the west,  
    Scarce seen upon yon golden sky,  
Hangs o'er the mountain's purple crest,  
    With one pale planet trembling nigh ;  
And beautiful her pearly light  
As when we blessed its beams last night ;  
But thou art on the far blue sea,  
And I can only think on thee.

*September, 1839.*

## THE GARDEN SEPULCHRE.

WRITTEN FOR THE CONSECRATION OF THE CEMETERY AT SWAN  
POINT, R. I.

IN the faith of Him who saw  
The eternal morning rise,  
Through the open gates of pearl,  
On the hills of Paradise, —

Looking to the promised land,  
Saw the verdant palms, that wave  
In the calm and lustrous air,  
Through the shadows of the grave ;

In his name whose deathless love,  
With a glory all divine,  
Filled the garden sepulchre  
Far away in Palestine ;

We would consecrate a place  
Where our loved ones may repose,  
When the storms of life are past,  
And the weary eyelids close ;

Fairer than a festal hall  
Wreath the chambers of their rest,  
Sacred to the tears that fall  
O'er the slumbers of the blest, —

Sacred to the hopes that rise  
Heavenward from this vale of tears,  
Soaring, with unwearied wing,  
Through the illimitable years.

Each sweet nursling of the spring  
Here shall weep its fresh'ning dews ;  
Here its fragile censer swing,  
And all its fragrant soul diffuse.

The lily, in her white symar,  
Fondly o'er the turf shall wave ;  
Asphodels and violets star  
All the greensward of the grave.

Here the pale anemone  
In the April breeze shall nod,  
And the may-flower weave her blooms  
Through and through the velvet sod.

Bending by the storied urn,  
Purple eglantine shall blow,

Till the pallid marble takes,  
From her cheek, a tender glow.

Where the folding branches close  
In a verdant coronal,  
Through their dim and dreaming boughs  
Faintly shall the sunbeams fall.

Memories, mournful, yet how sweet !  
Here shall weave their mystic spell ;  
Angels tread, with silent feet,  
Paths where love and sorrow dwell.

No rude sound of earth shall break  
The dim quiet, evermore ;  
But the winds and waves shall chant  
A requiem on the lonely shore.

Flitting through the laurel's gloom,  
The humming-bird shall wander by,  
Winnowing the floral bloom  
From cups of wreathèd ivory.

The bee shall wind his fairy horn,  
Faintly murmuring on the ear ;  
Sounds that seem of silence born  
Soothe the soul of sadness here ;

Many a low and mystic word,  
From the realm of shadows sent,  
In the busy throng unheard,  
Make the silence eloquent :

Words of sweetest promise, spoken  
Only where the dirge is sung ;  
Where the golden bowl is broken,  
And the silver chord unstrung.

Faith shall, with uplifted eye,  
All the solitude illumine ;  
Hope and Memory shall sit,  
Shining seraphs, by the tomb.

## A DAY OF THE INDIAN SUMMER.

" Yet one more smile, departing distant sun,  
Ere o'er the frozen earth the loud winds run,  
And snows are sifted o'er the meadows bare.'" — BRYANT.

A DAY of golden beauty ! Through the night  
The hoar-frost gathered, o'er each leaf and  
spray

Weaving its filmy net-work ; thin and bright,  
And shimmering like silver in the ray  
Of the soft, sunny morning ; turf and tree  
Pranct in its delicate embroidery,  
And every withered stump and mossy stone,  
With gems incrustcd and with seed-pearl sown ;  
While in the hedge the frosted berries glow,  
The scarlet holly and the purple sloe,  
And all is gorgeous, fairy-like, and frail  
As the famed gardens of the Arabian tale.

How soft and still the autumnal landscape lies,  
Calmly outspread beneath the smiling skies ;  
As if the earth, in prodigal array  
Of gems and broidered robes, kept holiday,

Her harvest yielded and her work all done,  
Basking in beauty 'neath the Autumn sun !

Yet once more, through the soft and balmy  
day,

Up the brown hill-side, by the woodland way,  
Far let us rove, through dreamy solitudes  
Where "Autumn's smile beams through the  
yellow woods,"

Fondly retracing each sweet summer haunt  
And sylvan pathway ; where the sunbeams  
slant

Through yonder copse, kindling the yellow stars  
Of the witch-hazel with their golden bars ;  
Or, lingering down this dim and shadowy lane,  
Where still the damp sod wears an emerald  
stain,

Though ripe brown nuts hang clustering in the  
hedge,

And the rude barberry, o'er yon rocky ledge,  
Droops with its pendant corals. When the  
showers

Of April clothed this winding path with flowers,  
Here oft we sought the violet, as it lay  
Buried in beds of moss and lichens gray ;  
And still the aster greets us, as we pass,  
With her faint smile, — among the withered  
grass

Beside the way, lingering as loath of heart,  
Like me, from these sweet solitudes to part.

Now seek we the dank borders of the stream,  
Where the tall fern-tufts shed a tawny gleam  
Over the water from their saffron plumes ;  
And, clustering near, the modest gentian blooms  
Lonely around, hallowed by sweetest song,  
The last and loveliest of the floral throng.  
Yet here we may not linger, for behold  
Where the stream widens, like a sea of gold  
Outspreading far before us ! All around  
Steep, wooded heights and sloping uplands  
bound

The sheltered scene ; along the distant shore,  
Through colored woods, the glinting sunbeams  
pour,

Touching their foliage with a thousand shades  
And hues of beauty, as the red light fades  
Beneath the shadow of a fleecy shroud,  
Or, through the rifted silver of the cloud,  
Pours down a brighter gleam. Gray willows  
lave

Their pendant branches in the crystal wave,  
And slender birch-trees o'er its banks incline,  
Whose tall, slight stems across the water shine

Like shafts of silver ; there the tawny elm, —  
The fairest subject of the sylvan realm, —  
The tufted pine-tree, and the cedar dark,  
And the young chestnut, its smooth, polished  
bark

Gleaming like porphyry in the yellow light ;  
The dark brown oak and the rich maple, dight  
In robes of scarlet, — all are standing there,  
So still, so calm, in the soft, misty air,  
That not a leaf is stirring ; not a sound  
Startles the deep repose that broods around,  
Save when the robin's melancholy song  
Is heard amid the coppice, and along  
The sunny side of yonder moss-grown wall  
That skirts our path the cricket's chirping call,  
Or the fond murmur of the drowsy bee  
O'er some lone floweret on the sunny lea,  
And, heard at intervals, a pattering sound  
Of ripened acorns rustling to the ground  
Through the crisp, withered leaves. How  
lonely all,

How calmly beautiful ! Long shadows fall  
More darkly o'er the wave as day declines,  
Yet from the west a deeper glory shines ;  
While every crested hill and rocky height  
Each moment varies in the kindling light

To some new form of beauty, changing  
through

All shades and colors of the rainbow's hue,  
The last still loveliest, till the gorgeous day  
Melts in a flood of golden light away ;  
And all is o'er. Before to-morrow's sun  
Cold winds may rise, and shrouding shadows  
dun

Obscure the scene ; yet shall these fading hues  
And fleeting forms their loveliness transfuse  
Into the mind, and memory shall burn  
The painting in on her enameled urn  
In undecaying colors. When the blast  
Hurtles around and snows are gathering fast,  
When musing sadly by the twilight hearth,  
Or lonely wandering through life's crowded  
path,

Its quiet beauty, rising through the gloom,  
Shall soothe the languid spirits and illumine  
The drooping fancy, — winning back the soul  
To cheerful thoughts through Nature's sweet  
control.

## A NOVEMBER LANDSCAPE.

How like a rich and gorgeous picture hung  
In memory's storied hall seems that fair scene  
O'er which long years their mellowing tints  
have flung!

The way-side flowers had faded one by one,  
Hoar were the hills, the meadows drear and  
dun,

When homeward wending, 'neath the dusky  
screen

Of the autumnal woods, at close of day,  
As o'er a pine-clad height my pathway lay,  
Lo! at a sudden turn, the vale below  
Lay far outspread, all flushed with purple light;  
Gray rocks and umbered woods gave back the  
glow

Of the last day-beams, fading into night;  
While down a glen where dark Moshassuck  
flows,

With all its kindling lamps the distant city  
rose.

## A HOLLOW OF THE HILLS.

IN the soft gloom of Summer's balmy eve,  
When from the lingering glances of the Sun  
The sad Earth turns away her blushing cheek,  
Mantling its glow in twilight's shadowy veil,  
Oft 'mid the falling dews I love to stray  
Onward and onward, through the pleasant  
fields,

Far up the liliated borders of the stream,  
To this green, silent hollow of the hills,  
Endeared by thronging memories of the past.

Oft have I lingered on this rustic bridge,  
To view the limpid waters winding on  
Under dim-vaulted woods, whose woven boughs  
Of beech and maple and broad sycamore  
Throw their soft, moving shadows o'er the  
wave ;

While blossomed vines, dropped to the water's  
brim,  
Hang idly swaying in the summer wind.

The birds that wander through the twilight  
    heaven  
Are mirrored far beneath me ; and young  
    leaves

That tremble on the birch-tree's silver boughs,  
In the cool wave reflected, gleam below,  
Like twinkling stars athwart the verdant gloom.

A sound of rippling waters rises sweet  
Amid the silence ; and the western breeze,  
Sighing through sedges and low meadow-  
    blooms,

Comes wafting gentle thoughts from Memory's  
    land,

And wakes the long-hushed music of the  
    heart.

Oft dewy spring hath brimmed the brook  
    with showers ;

Oft hath the long, bright summer fringed its  
    banks

With breathing blossoms ; and the autumn  
    sun

Shed mellow hues o'er all its wooded shores,  
Since first I trod these paths, in youth's sweet  
    prime,

With loved ones whom Time's desolating wave  
Hath wafted now forever from my side.

Long years have passed, and on its flowery  
brink,  
Bereft and sorrow-taught, alone I stand,  
Listening the hollow music of the wind.  
Alone — alone : the stars are far away,  
And wild clouds wander o'er the face of  
heaven ;  
But still the green earth wears her summer  
crown,  
And whispers hope through all her breathing  
flowers.

Not all in vain the vision of our youth,  
The apocalypse of beauty and of love,  
The stag-like heart of hope. Life's mystic  
dream

The soul shall yet interpret ; to our prayer  
The Isis veil be lifted. Though we pine  
E'en 'mid the ungathered roses of our youth,  
Pierced with strange pangs and longings in-  
finite,

As if earth's fairest flowers served but to wake  
Sad, haunting memories of our Eden home ;  
Not all in vain. Meantime, in patient trust,  
Rest we on Nature's bosom : from her eye,  
Serene and still, drinking in faith and love ;  
To her calm pulse attempering the heart  
That throbs too wildly for ideal bliss.

Oh gentle Mother, heal me, for I faint  
Upon life's arid pathway ; or apart,  
On lonely mountain heights, oft hear a voice  
Tempting my agony with perilous thoughts  
Of death's calm, dreamless slumber ; and my  
feet

On the dark mountains stumble. Near thy  
heart,

Close nestling, let me lie ; and let thy breath,  
Fragrant and cool, fall on my fever'd cheek,  
As in those unworn ages ere pale thought  
Forestalled life's patient harvest. Give me  
strength

To follow wheresoe'er o'er the world's waste  
The cloudy pillar moveth ; till at last  
It guide to pleasant vales and pastures green  
By the still waters of eternal life.

TO ———.

THINE is the hope that knows no fear,  
The patient heart and true ;  
Whose wrongs but make the right more dear,  
Whose love no loss may rue.

Sometimes a soft and sad surprise, —  
A pitying angel, passion free, —  
Looks earthward, from thy tender eyes,  
Upon our frail humanity.

Thy calm brow speaks a nature true,  
A marble constancy of soul,  
A heart that can its dreams subdue  
To wisdom's passionless control.

Thine eye hath the serenity  
By Raphael to the Virgin given,  
And from its blue benignity  
Looks out the holy light of heaven.

## MORNING AFTER A STORM.

THE wan and melancholy stars  
Are fading with the fading gloom,  
And, through the Orient's cloudy bars,  
I see the rose of morning bloom.

All flushed, and fairer for the storm,  
It opens on our vernal skies,  
Divinely beautiful and warm,  
As on the hills of Paradise.

And on its breast a shining spark,  
Like a bright drop of morning dew,  
★ Lies glittering on the rosy dark,  
Then melts and mingles with the blue.

Sweet morning-star ! thy silver beams,  
Foretell a fairer life to come ;  
Arouse the sleeper from his dreams  
And call the wandering spirit home.

My soul, ascending like a lark,  
    Would follow on thine airy flight ;  
And like yon little diamond spark,  
    Dissolve into the realms of light.

TO E. O. S.

"Eos, fair Goddess of the Morn ! whose eyes  
Drive back Night's wandering ghosts." — HORNE'S *Orion*.

WHEN issuing from the realms of "Shadow  
Land "

I see thee mid the Orient's kindling bloom,  
With mystic lilies gleaming in thy hand,

Gathered by dream-light in the dusky gloom  
Of bowers enchanted — I behold again

The fabled Goddess of the Morning, veiled  
In fleecy clouds. Thy cheek, so softly paled  
With memories of the Night's mysterious  
reign,

And something of the star-light, burning still  
In thy deep, dreamy eyes, do but fulfill  
The vision more divinely to my thought :

While all the cheerful hopes enkindling  
round thee —

Warm hopes, wherewith thy prescient soul  
hath crowned thee —  
Are with the breath of morning fragrance  
fraught.

## SHE BLOOMS NO MORE.

"Oh primavera, gioventu dell' anno,  
Bella madre di fiori,  
Tu torni ben, ma teco  
Non tornani i sereni  
E fortunati di delle mi gioge." — GUARINI.

I DREAD to see the summer sun  
Come glowing up the sky,  
And early pansies, one by one,  
Opening the violet eye.

Again the fair azalea bows  
Beneath her snowy crest ;  
In yonder hedge the hawthorn blows,  
The robin builds her nest ;

The tulips lift their proud tiars,  
The lilac waves her plumes ;  
And, peeping through my lattice-bars,  
The rose-acacia blooms.

But she can bloom on earth no more,  
Whose early doom I mourn ;

Nor spring nor summer can restore  
Our flower, untimely shorn.

She was our morning-glory,  
Our primrose, pure and pale,  
Our little mountain daisy,  
Our lily of the vale.

Now dim as folded violets,  
Her eyes of dewy light ;  
And her rosy lips have mournfully  
Breathed out their last good-night.

'T is therefore that I dread to see  
The glowing summer sun ;  
And the balmy blossoms on the tree,  
Unfolding one by one.

## THE PAST.

"So fern, und doch so nah." — GOETHE.

THICK darkness broodeth o'er the world :  
The raven pinions of the Night,  
Close on her silent bosom furled,  
Reflect no gleam of Orient light.  
E'en the wild Norland fires that mocked  
The faint bloom of the eastern sky,  
Now leave me, in close darkness locked,  
To-night's weird realm of fantasy.

Borne from pale shadow-lands remote,  
A morphean music, wildly sweet,  
Seems, on the starless gloom, to float,  
Like the white-pinioned Paraclete.  
Softly into my dream it flows,  
Then faints into the silence drear ;  
While from the hollow dark outgrows  
The phantom Past, pale gliding near.

The visioned Past ; so strangely fair !  
So veiled in shadowy, soft regrets.

So steeped in sadness, like the air  
That lingers when the day-star sets !  
Ah ! could I fold it to my heart,  
On its cold lip my kisses press,  
This waste of aching life impart,  
To win it back from nothingness !

I loathe the purple light of day,  
And shun the morning's golden star,  
Beside that shadowy form to stray,  
Forever near, yet oh how far !  
Thin as a cloud of summer even,  
All beauty from my gaze it bars ;  
Shuts out the silver cope of heaven,  
And glooms athwart the dying stars.

Cold, sad, and spectral, by my side,  
It breathes of love's ethereal bloom, —  
Of bridal memories, long affied  
To the dread silence of the tomb :  
Sweet, cloistered memories, that the heart  
Shuts close within its chalice cold ;  
Faint perfumes, that no more dispart  
From the bruised lily's floral fold.

“ My soul is weary of her life ; ”  
My heart sinks with a slow despair ;

The solemn, star-lit hours are rife  
With fantasy ; the noontide glare,  
And the cool morning, fancy free,  
Are false with shadows ; for the day  
Brings no blithe sense of verity,  
Nor wins from twilight thoughts away.

Oh, bathe me in the Lethean stream,  
And feed me on the lotus flowers ;  
Shut out this false, bewildering dream,  
This memory of departed hours !  
Sweet haunting dream ! so strangely fair —  
So veiled in shadowy, soft regrets —  
So steeped in sadness, like the air  
That lingers when the day-star sets !

The Future can no charm confer,  
My heart's deep solitudes to break ;  
No angel's foot again shall stir  
The waters of that silent lake.  
I wander in pale dreams away,  
And shun the morning's golden star,  
To follow still that failing ray,  
Forever near, yet oh how far !

*Feb., 1846.*

## “THE RAVEN.”

RAVEN, from the dim dominions  
On the Night's Plutonian shore,  
Oft I hear thy dusky pinions  
Wave and flutter round my door —  
See the shadow of thy pinions  
Float along the moon-lit floor ;

Often, from the oak-woods glooming  
Round some dim ancestral tower,  
In the lurid distance looming —  
Some high solitary tower —  
I can hear thy storm-cry booming  
Through the lonely midnight hour.

When the moon is at the zenith,  
Thou dost haunt the moated hall,  
Where the marish flower greeneth  
O'er the waters, like a pall —  
Where the House of Usher leaneth,  
Darkly nodding to its fall :

There I see thee, dimly gliding, —  
    See thy black plumes waving slow, —  
In its hollow casements hiding,  
    When their shadow yawns below,  
To the sullen tarn confiding  
    The dark secrets of their woe :—

See thee, when the stars are burning  
    In their cressets, silver clear, —  
When Ligeia's spirit yearning  
    For the earth-life, wanders near, —  
When Morella's soul returning,  
    Weirdly whispers "I am here."

Once, within a realm enchanted,  
    On a far isle of the seas,  
By unearthly visions haunted,  
    By unearthly melodies,  
Where the evening sunlight slanted  
    Golden through the garden trees, —

Where the dreamy moonlight dozes,  
    Where the early violets dwell,  
Listening to the silver closes  
    Of a lyric loved too well,  
Suddenly, among the roses,  
    Like a cloud, thy shadow fell.

Once, where Ulalume lies sleeping,  
Hard by Auber's haunted mere,  
With the ghouls a vigil keeping,  
On that night of all the year,  
Came thy sounding pinions, sweeping  
Through the leafless woods of Weir !

Oft, with Proserpine I wander  
On the Night's Plutonian shore,  
Hoping, fearing, while I ponder  
On thy loved and lost Lenore —  
On the demon doubts that sunder  
Soul from soul for evermore ;

Trusting, though with sorrow laden,  
That when life's dark dream is o'er,  
By whatever name the maiden  
Lives within thy mystic lore,  
Eiros, in that distant Aidenn,  
Shall his Charmion meet once more.

## REMEMBERED MUSIC.

OH, lonely heart ! why do thy pulses beat  
To the hushed music of a voice so dear,  
That all sweet, mournful cadences repeat  
Its low, bewildering accents to thine ear.  
Why dost thou question the pale stars to know  
If that rich music floats upon the air,  
In those far realms where, else, their fires  
would glow  
Forever beautiful to thy despair ?  
Trust thou in God ; for, far within the veil,  
Where glad hosannas through the empyrean  
roll,  
And choral anthems of the angel's hail  
With hallelujah's sweet the enfranchised  
soul, —  
The voice that sang earth's sorrow through  
earth's night,  
Shall with glad seraphs sing, in God's great  
light.

## OUR ISLAND OF DREAMS.

“ By the foam  
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.” — KEATS.

TELL him I lingered alone on the shore,  
Where we parted, in sorrow, to meet never  
more ;  
The night wind blew cold on my desolate heart,  
But colder those wild words of doom, “ Ye  
must part ? ”

O'er the dark, heaving waters, I sent forth a  
cry ;  
Save the wail of those waters there came no  
reply.  
I longed, like a bird, o'er the billows to flee,  
From our lone island home and the moan of  
the sea :

Away — far away — from the wild ocean shore,  
Where the waves ever murmur, “ No more,  
never more ; ”

Where I wake, in the wild noon of midnight,  
to hear  
That lone song of the surges, so mournful and  
drear.

When the clouds that now veil from us heaven's  
fair light,  
Their soft, silver lining turn forth on the night ;  
When time shall the vapors of falsehood dispel,  
He shall know if I loved him ; but never how  
well.

1849.

## THE LAST FLOWERS.

"The undying voice of that dead time,  
With its interminable chime,  
Rings on my spirit like a knell."

Dost thou remember that Autumnal day  
When by the Seekonk's lonely wave we  
stood,

And marked the languor of repose that lay,  
Softer than sleep, on valley, wave, and wood ?

A trance of holy sadness seemed to lull  
The charmèd earth and circumambient air,  
And the low murmur of the leaves seemed full  
Of a resigned and passionless despair.

Though the warm breath of summer lingered  
still

In the lone paths where late her footsteps  
passed,

The pallid star-flowers on the purple hill  
Sighed dreamily, "We are the last ! the last !"

I stood beside thee, and a dream of heaven  
Around me like a golden halo fell !  
Then the bright veil of fantasy was riven,  
And my lips murmured, " Fare thee well ! —  
farewell ! "

I dared not listen to thy words, nor turn  
To meet the mystic language of thine eyes,  
I only *felt* their power, and in the urn  
Of memory, treasured their sweet rhapsodies.

We parted then, forever, — and the hours  
Of that bright day were gathered to the  
past, —  
But, through long wintry nights, I heard the  
flowers  
Sigh dreamily, " We are the last ! — the  
last ! "

*September, 1849.*

## SONG.

I BADE thee stay. Too well I know  
The fault was mine, — mine only :  
I dared not think upon the past,  
All desolate and lonely.

I feared in memory's silent air  
Too sadly to regret thee, —  
Feared in the night of my despair  
I could not all forget thee.

Yet go, — ah, go ! those pleading eyes,  
Those low, sweet tones, appealing  
From heart to heart, — ah, dare I trust  
That passionate revealing ?

For ah, those dark and pleading eyes  
Evoke too keen a sorrow, —  
A pang that will not pass away,  
With thy wild vows, to-morrow.

A love immortal and divine  
    Within my heart is waking :  
Its dream of anguish and despair  
    It owns not but in breaking.

## WITHERED FLOWERS.

REMEMBRANCERS of happiness ! to me

Ye bring sweet thoughts of the year's purple prime,

Wild, mingling melodies of bird and bee,

That pour on summer winds their silvery chime

Of balmy incense, burdening all the air,

From flowers that by the sunny garden wall  
Bloomed at your side, nursed into beauty there

By dews and silent showers : but these to *all*  
Ye bring. Oh ! sweeter far than these the spell

Shrined in those fairy urns for *me* alone ;  
For me a charm sleeps in each honeyed cell,  
Whose power can call back hours of rapture flown,

To the sad heart sweet memories restore,  
Tones, looks, and words of love that may re-  
turn no more.

## THE PHANTOM VOICE.

*"It is a phantom voice :*

Again! — again! how solemnly it falls  
Into my heart of hearts!"

SCENES FROM *Politian*.

THROUGH the solemn hush of midnight,  
How sadly on my ear  
Falls the echo of a harp whose tones  
I never more may hear !

A wild, unearthly melody,  
Whose monotone doth move  
The saddest, sweetest cadences  
Of sorrow and of love :

Till the burden of remembrance weighs  
Like lead upon my heart,  
And the shadow, on my soul that sleeps,  
Will never more depart.

The ghastly moonlight, gliding  
Like a phantom through the gloom,

How it fills with solemn fantasies  
My solitary room !

And the sighing winds of Autumn,  
Ah ! how sadly they repeat  
That low, bewildering melody,  
So mystically sweet !

I hear it softly murmuring  
At midnight o'er the hill,  
Or across the wide savannas,  
When all beside is still.

I hear it in the moaning  
Of the melancholy main ;  
In the rushing of the night-wind,  
The rhythm of the rain.

E'en the wild-flowers of the forest,  
Waving sadly to and fro,  
But whisper to my boding heart  
The burden of its woe.

And the spectral moon, now paling  
And fading, seems to say,  
" I leave thee to remembrances  
That will not pass away."

Ah, through all the solemn midnight,  
How mournful 't is to hark  
To the voices of the silence,  
The whisper of the dark !

In vain I turn, some solace  
From the distant stars to crave :  
They are shining on thy sepulchre,  
Are smiling on thy grave.

How I weary of their splendor !  
All night long they seem to say,  
“ We are lonely, — sad and lonely, —  
Far away, — far, far away ! ”

Thus, through all the solemn midnight,  
That phantom voice I hear,  
As it echoes through the silence,  
When no earthly sound is near.

And though dawn-light yields to noon-  
light,  
And though darkness turns to day,  
They but leave me to remembrances  
That will not pass away.

*November, 1849.*

## ARCTURUS.

WRITTEN IN OCTOBER.

“ Our star looks through the storm.”

STAR of resplendent front ! thy glorious eye  
Shines on me still from out yon clouded sky, —  
Shines on me through the horrors of a night  
More drear than ever fell o’er day so bright, —  
Shines till the envious Serpent slinks away,  
And pales and trembles at thy steadfast ray.

Hast thou not stooped from heaven, fair star !  
to be

So near me in this hour of agony ? —  
So near, — so bright, — so glorious, that I seem  
To lie entranced as in some wondrous dream, —  
All earthly joys forgot, — all earthly fear,  
Purged in the light of thy resplendent sphere :  
Kindling within my soul a pure desire  
To blend with thine its incandescent fire, —  
To lose my very life in thine, and be  
Soul of thy soul through all eternity.

## RESURGEMUS.

I MOURN thee not : no words can tell  
The solemn calm that tranced my breast  
When first I knew thy soul had past  
From earth to its eternal rest ;

For doubt and darkness, o'er thy head,  
Forever waved their Condor wings ;  
And in their murky shadows bred  
Forms of unutterable things ;

And all around thy silent hearth,  
The glory that once blushed and bloomed  
Was but a dim-remembered dream  
Of "the old time entombed."

Those melancholy eyes that seemed  
To look beyond all time, or, turned  
On eyes they loved, so softly beamed, —  
How few their mystic language learned.

How few could read their depths, or know  
The proud, high heart that dwelt alone  
In gorgeous palaces of woe,  
Like Eblis on his burning throne.

For ah ! no human heart could brook  
The darkness of thy doom to share,  
And not a living eye could look  
Unscathed upon thy dread despair.

I mourn thee not : life had no lore  
Thy soul in morphean dew to steep,  
Love's lost nepenthe to restore,  
Or bid the avenging sorrow sleep.

Yet, while the night of life shall last,  
While the slow stars above me roll,  
In the heart's solitudes I keep  
A solemn vigil for thy soul.

I tread dim cloistral aisles, where all  
Beneath are solemn-sounding graves ;  
While o'er the oriel, like a pall,  
A dark, funereal shadow waves.

There, kneeling by a lampless shrine,  
Alone amid a place of tombs,

My erring spirit pleads for thine  
Till light along the Orient blooms.

Oh, when thy faults are all forgiven,  
The vigil of my life outwrought,  
In some calm altitude of heaven, —  
The dream of thy prophetic thought, —

Forever near thee, soul in soul,  
Near thee forever, yet how far,  
May our lives reach love's perfect goal  
In the high order of thy star!

## SONNETS.

### I.

TO —.

VAINLY my heart had with thy sorceries striven :  
It had no refuge from thy love, — no Heaven  
But in thy fatal presence ; — from afar  
It owned thy power and trembled like a star  
O'erfraught with light and splendor. Could I  
deem

How dark a shadow should obscure its beam ?—  
Could I believe that pain could ever dwell  
Where thy bright presence cast its blissful  
spell ?

Thou wert my proud palladium ;—could I fear  
The avenging Destinies when thou wert  
near ? —

*Thou* wert my Destiny ;— thy song, thy fame,  
The wild enchantments clustering round thy  
name,

Were my soul's heritage, its royal dower ;  
Its glory and its kingdom and its power !

## II.

WHEN first I looked into thy glorious eyes,  
And saw, with their unearthly beauty pained,  
Heaven deepening within heaven, like the  
skies

Of autumn nights without a shadow stained,  
I stood as one whom some strange dream en-  
thralls ;

For, far away, in some lost life divine,  
Some land which every glorious dream recalls,  
A spirit looked on me with eyes like thine.  
E'en now, though death has veiled their starry  
light,

And closed their lids in his relentless night —  
As some strange dream, remembered in a  
dream,

Again I see, in sleep, their tender beam ;  
Unfading hopes their cloudless azure fill,  
Heaven deepening within heaven, serene and  
still.

## III.

OFt since thine earthly eyes have closed on  
mine,

Our souls, dim-wandering in the hall of  
dreams,

Hold mystic converse on the life divine,

By the still music of immortal streams ;

And oft thy spirit tells how souls, affied

By sovran destinies, no more can part, —

How death and hell are powerless to divide

Souls whose deep lives lie folded heart in  
heart.

And if, at times, some lingering shadow lies

Heavy upon my path, some haunting dread,

Then do I point thee to the harmonies

Of those calm heights whereto our souls  
arise

Through suffering, — the faith that doth ap-  
prove

In death the deathless power and divine life  
of love.

## IV.

WE met beneath September's gorgeous beams :  
Long in my house of life thy star had  
    reigned ;  
Its mournful splendor trembled through my  
    dreams,  
Nor with the night's phantasmal glories  
    waned.  
We wandered thoughtfully o'er golden meads  
To a lone woodland, lit by starry flowers,  
Where a wild, solitary pathway leads  
Through mouldering sepulchres and cypress  
    bowers.  
A dreamy sadness filled the autumnal air ; —  
By a low, nameless grave I stood beside  
    thee,  
My heart according to thy murmured prayer  
The full, sweet answers that my lips denied  
    thee.  
O mournful faith, on that dread altar sealed —  
Sad dawn of love in realms of death revealed !

## V.

ON our lone pathway bloomed no earthly  
hopes :—

Sorrow and death were near us, as we stood  
Where the dim forest, from the upland slopes,  
Swept darkly to the sea. The enchanted  
wood

Thrilled, as by some foreboding terror stirred ;  
And as the waves broke on the lonely shore,  
In their low monotone, methought I heard  
A solemn voice that sighed, “ Ye meet no  
more.”

There, while the level sunbeams seemed to  
burn

Through the long aisles of red, autumnal  
gloom, —

Where stately, storied cenotaphs inurn

Sweet human hopes, too fair on Earth to  
bloom, —

Was the bud reaped, whose petals, pure and  
cold,

Sleep on my heart till Heaven the flower un-  
fold.

## VI.

IF thy sad heart, pining for human love,  
In its earth solitude grew dark with fear,  
Lest the high Sun of Heaven itself should  
    prove  
Powerless to save from that phantasmal  
    sphere  
Wherein thy spirit wandered — if the flowers  
That pressed around thy feet, seemed but  
    to bloom  
In lone Gethsemanes, through starless hours,  
When all, who loved, had left thee to thy  
    doom : —  
Oh, yet believe, that, in that hollow vale,  
Where thy soul lingers, waiting to attain  
So much of Heaven's sweet grace as shall avail  
To lift its burden of remorseful pain, —  
My soul shall meet thee and its Heaven forego  
Till God's great love, on both, one hope, one  
    Heaven bestow.

## ARCTURUS.

WRITTEN IN APRIL.

"Nec morti esse locum, sed viva volare  
Sideris in numerum atque alto succedere cœlo."

VIRGIL, *Geor.*, IV.

AGAIN, imperial star ! thy mystic beams  
Pour their wild splendors on my waking  
dreams,

Piercing the blue depths of the vernal night  
With opal shafts and flames of ruby light ;  
Filling the air with melodies, that come  
Mournful and sweet, from the dark, sapphire  
dome, —

Weird sounds, that make the cheek with wonder pale,  
As their wild symphonies o'ersweep the  
gale.

For, in that gorgeous world, I fondly deem,  
Dwells the freed soul of one whose earthly  
dream

Was full of beauty, majesty and wo ;  
One who, in that pure realm of thine, doth  
    grow  
Into a power serene, — a solemn joy,  
Undimmed by earthly sorrow or alloy ;  
Sphered far above the dread, phantasmal  
    gloom, —  
The penal tortures of that living tomb  
Wherein his earth-life languished ; — who shall  
    tell  
The drear enchantments of that Dantean hell !

“ Was it not Fate, whose earthly name is Sor-  
    row, ”  
That bade him, with prophetic soul, to borrow  
From all the stars that fleck night’s purple  
    dome,  
Thee, bright Arcturus ! for his Eden home : —  
Was it not Fate, whose name in Heaven  
    above,  
Is Truth and Goodness and unchanging  
    Love, —  
Was it not Fate, that bade him turn to thee  
As the bright regent of his destiny ? —  
For when thine orb passed from the lengthen-  
    ing gloom  
Of autumn nights, a morning-star to bloom

Beside Aurora's eastern gates of pearl,  
*He* passed from earth, his weary wings to furl  
In the cool vales of Heaven : thence, through  
    yon sea  
Of starry isles, to hold his course to thee.

Now, when in April's cloudless nights, I turn  
To where thy pharos mid the stars doth burn, —  
A glorious cynosure, — I read in thee  
The rune of Virgil's golden augury ; <sup>1</sup>  
And deem that o'er thy seas of silver calm  
Floats the far perfume of the Eden palm.

<sup>1</sup> For there is no place of annihilation : but alive they  
mount up each into his own order of star, and take their high  
seat in the heavens. — *Georgics*, Book IV.

*April*, 1850.

## TO THE MORNING-STAR.

“Fair crescent star, upborne on waves of light, —  
Bud of the morning, that must fade so soon.”

DALGONI.

SWEET Phosphor ! star of Love and Hope,  
Again I see thy silver horn  
Rise o'er the dark and dewy slope  
Of yonder hills that hide the morn.

All night the glooming shadows lay  
So thick on valley, wave, and wold,  
I scarce could deem the buried day  
Would ever pierce their shrouding fold :

Yet, even now, a line of light  
Comes slowly surging o'er the dark ;  
And lo ! thy crescent, floating bright  
And buoyant as a fairy bark.

But ah, the solemn stars of night, —  
The distant stars that long have set, —

How can I, in thy nearer light  
Of love and hope, their smile forget? —

The stars that trembled through my dream,  
That spoke in accents faint and far,  
Can I forget their pensive beam,  
For thine, my radiant morning-star?

No dawn-light in my soul can wake  
One hope to make the world more fair;  
No noon-tide ray illumine the lake  
Of dark remembrance, brooding there;

But Night comes down the paling west,  
With mystic glories on her brow: —  
She lays her cold hand on my breast,  
And bids, for me, the lotus blow:

She bears me on her Lethean tides  
To lands by living waters fed:  
She lifts the cloudy veil that hides  
The dim campagnas of the dead.

Down the long corridor of dreams,  
She leads me silently away;  
Till, through its shadowy portal, streams  
The dawn of that diviner Day!

# HOURS OF LIFE.



# HOURS OF LIFE.



## MORNING.

“Temp’ era dal principio del matino  
E’l sol montava in su con quelle stelle  
Ch’eran con lui quando l’Amor divino  
Mosse da prima quelle cose belle ;  
Si cha bene sperir mera cagione  
L’ora del tempo e la dolce stagione.”

DANTE.

ERE youth with its auroral blooms  
Dispels the tender twilight glooms  
Of Infancy, while yet it lies  
Close to the gates of Paradise,  
No fears the guileless bosom thrill ;  
The little stranger slumbers still,  
O’ershadowed by the silent wings  
Of angels, till the morning brings  
Music and perfume, and around him flings  
Her rosy mist-wreaths, drooping warm and low,  
And prints her fragrant kisses on his brow.

Startled from out that dreamless rest,  
Through mist-wreaths, drooping warm and  
low,  
I saw her faint smile in the east,  
I felt her kisses on my brow.

From the high meadows, dewy-sweet,  
Fair Eos with her silver feet  
Chased the shadows as they crept  
Under woodland boughs away,  
Or down the airy uplands swept  
Into hollows cool and gray,  
Till her full refulgence, bright  
As a perfect chrysolite,  
Filled the solemn dome of Night !

With a sweet, indolent surprise,  
Undimmed by haunting memories,  
I saw the gradual glory rise.

Divinely calm and fancy-free  
Were those morning hours to me ;  
I recked not of the bitter root  
That bears the paradisal fruit ;  
I knew not that the serpent brood  
Lurked in that Aidenn solitude ;

For childhood kept inviolate  
The tenure of its fair estate,  
Lulled in a murmurous monotone,  
As when bees in violets drone.

Till gently as the spring-time showers  
Wake the rose-buds into flowers,  
Nature wrought her spells to lure  
The child-heart from its clear-obscure,  
Dazzling the bewildered sense  
With dædalian opulence,  
Protéan visions, sweet and strange,  
And swift and subtle interchange  
Of light with shadow, too intense  
For the sweet calm of innocence :  
Soon like the pure and priceless pearl  
    In Egypt's festal goblet tossed,  
It vanished in the dizzy whirl  
    Of life's bewildering pleasures lost.

Wild hopes came fluttering round my heart  
And swept its folded leaves apart,  
As underneath those cloudless skies  
I wandered with my Destinies,  
Nor sought to read their silent eyes.

Thoughts for pain too dear — too deep  
For pleasure — caused the heart to weep

Tears that, steeped in fragrance, fell  
Like dew-drops from the lily's bell.

Dream followed dream : and still the day  
Floated on golden wings away.

Then, while each little woodland bird  
    One sweet note forever sung,  
My heart on one bewildering word  
    Its wealth of morning music flung :  
All the glory and the gloom —  
    All the passion and the power —  
All the mystic bale and bloom  
    Of its high imperial dower.

Like the sole phoenix in his perfumed nest,  
Love reigned within my heart a sovran guest, —  
Reigned in my heart of hearts — the thronèd  
    lord

Of its young life, unquestioned and adored ;  
Folding its fragrant altar-gifts in flame  
    That made the summer heavens look wan  
    and pale,  
Forestalling life's fair heritage and claim  
    On earthly hope till hope waxed cold and  
    stale,  
Bankrupt and blighted with the fond excess  
Of a too rare and costly happiness,

A flame that earth's calm joys too proudly  
spurned,  
And left but ashes where its altars burned.

Yet, like the fabled Greek, superbly bold,  
Who on Jove's awful countenance would gaze,  
Pining immortal beauty to behold,  
Consumed beneath the lightning of its rays,  
My conscious heart a willing fate had sought,  
Undaunted by the pangs its triumphs bought ;  
Content love's mortal penalties to share,  
And, for a dream so sweet, a dreadless doom  
to dare.

I trod o'er meads of asphodel,  
I walked the hall of dreams,  
And gathered sweeter flowers than fell  
By Enna's fabled streams.

Every wind of morning bore  
Music from some haunted shore,  
Some fairy island o'er the seas,  
Insphered in Orient fantasies.

Every cloud that floated by  
Veiled beneath its silver wing  
Missives from a world more fair  
Than the Poet's dream of spring.

I sought the holy wells of song  
Love's wild enchantments to prolong,  
And walked as in a waking trance  
The wonder-land of old romance.

Sometimes to a triumph march  
Throbb'd the life-pulse, warm and high ;  
Sometimes tolled in silver time  
To a haunting melody,  
Like a holy matin bell  
Chiming in a far chapelle :  
Now trembling to a cadence sweet  
As the clear and silver beat  
Of fairy footsteps, or the fall  
Of fountains in a marble hall ;  
Now as to an echoing horn,  
Far through moonlit forests borne,  
Sad and rhythmically slow,  
Moved to grand adagio.

Dream followed dream : the horizon lay  
A line of silver far away ;  
The trees soared far into the blue,  
The rose-cups dripped with morning dew,  
And still the level life-path wound  
Away, away, o'er flowery ground.

## NOON.

“The mysterious silence of full noon.”

BAILEY. *Festus.*

“Combien de fois dans le silence de minuit, et dans cet autre silence de midi, si accablant, si inquiet, si dévorant, n'ai-je pas senti mon cœur se précipiter vers un but inconnu, vers un bonheur sans forme et sans nom, qui est au ciel, qui est dans l'air, qui est partout, comme l'amour! C'est l'aspiration sainte de la partie la plus éthérée de notre âme vers l'inconnu.”

GEORGE SAND

DREAM followed dream ; and still the day  
Floated on golden wings away ;

But in the hush of the high noon,  
Touched by a sorrow without name,  
Consumed by a slow fever-flame,

I loathed my life's mysterious boon,  
Unconscious of its end or aim ;

Lost in a languor of repose, —

A luxury of gloom, —

As when the curved, voluptuous rose  
Droops with its wealth of bloom.

Decked as for a festival

Seemed the wide and lonely hall

Of Nature, but a mute despair  
Filled the universal air ; —  
A sense of loneliness and void, —  
A wealth of beauty unenjoyed, —  
A sadness born mid the excess  
Of life's unvalued loveliness.

Every pulse of being panting  
With a bliss it fain would share,  
Still there seemed a presence wanting,  
Still some lost ideal haunting  
All the lone and lustrous air.

Far off I heard the solemn chimes  
Of Life and Death, —  
The rhythm of ancestral rhymes  
Above, — beneath !

“Light in shadow ever fading, —  
Death on Life's bright realm invading, —  
Pain with pleasure keeping measure, —  
Wasting care with golden treasure.  
So the ancient burden rang,  
So the choral voices sang.

Though beautiful on all the hills  
The summer noonlight lay,

Far in the west a single cloud  
Lay folded like a fleecy shroud,  
    Ready to veil its ray.  
And over all a purple pall  
    Seemed waiting for the day.

I heard far, phantom voices calling  
    Over all the flowery wold, —  
O'er the westering meadows falling  
    Into slopes of gleamy gold ; —

Still I heard them calling, — calling, —  
    Through the dim, entangled glooms, —  
Far through sunless valleys falling  
    Downward to a place of tombs.

Near me pressed a vassal throng,  
Slaves to custom, serfs to wrong —  
Hollow-hearted, vain and cold,  
Minions of the earthly mold ;  
Holding in supreme derision  
Memories of the life Elysian,  
Reckless of the birthright lost,  
Heedless of the heavenly host,  
Traitors to the Holy Ghost !

Haunted by a nameless terror, —  
Thrilled by a foreboding breath,  
As the aspen wildly trembles  
When the winds are still as death, —  
I sought amid the sadness drear  
Some loved familiar face to cheer  
The solitude, — some lingering tone  
Of love ere love and hope had flown.

I heard a low voice breathe my name:  
Was it the echo of my own, —  
That weird and melancholy tone, —  
That voice whose subtle sweetness came  
Keen as the serpent's tongue of flame?  
So near, its music seemed to me  
The music of my heart to be.

Still I heard it, nearer, clearer,  
When all other songs had flown, —  
Floating round me till it bound me  
In a wild world of its own.

Suddenly a chill wind leapt  
Through its woven harmonies;  
All its silver chords were snapt  
As a wind-harp's by the breeze.

A shudder through the silence crept  
And death athwart the noonlight swept.

Then came the pall, the dirge, the knell,  
As, dust to dust, the earth-clods fell,  
Down crumbling on a coffin lid,  
Within whose narrow casket hid, —  
Shut from the cheerful light of day, —  
Buried, yet quick, my own heart lay.

Graves closed round my path of life,  
The beautiful had fled ;  
Pale shadows wandered by my side,  
And whispered of the dead.  
The far off hollow of the sky  
Seemed like an idle mockery. —  
The vaulted hollow of the sky,  
With its blue depths of mystery  
But rounded Death's vast empery.

O'erwearied with life's restless change  
From ecstasy to agony,  
Its fleeting pleasures born to die,  
The mirage of its fantasy,  
Its worn and melancholy range  
Of hopes that could no more estrange  
The married heart of memory,

Doomed, while we drain life's perfumed wine,  
For the dull Lethean wave to pine,  
And, for each thrill of joy, to know  
Despair's slow pulse or sorrow's throe, —  
I sought some central truth to span  
    These wide extremes of good and ill, —  
I longed with one bold glance to scan  
    Life's perfect sphere, to rend at will  
The gloom of Erebus, — dread zone,  
Coiled like a serpent round the throne  
Of Heaven, — the realm where Justice veils  
Her heart and holds her even scales, —  
Where awful Nemesis awaits  
The doomed, by Pluto's iron gates.

In the long noon-tide of my sorrow,  
I questioned of the eternal morrow ;  
    I gazed in sullen awe  
Far through the illimitable gloom  
Down-deepening like the swift maelstrom,  
    The doubting soul to draw  
Into eternal solitudes,  
Where unrelenting silence broods  
    Around the throne of Law.

I questioned the dim chronicle  
    Of ages gone before, —

I listened for the triumph songs  
That rang from shore to shore,  
Where the heroes and the conquerors  
wrought  
The mighty deeds of yore, —  
Where the foot-prints of the martyrs  
Had bathed the earth in gore,  
And the war-horns of the warriors  
Were heard from shore to shore.

Their blood on desert plains was shed, —  
Their voices on the wind had fled, —  
They were the drear and shadowy DEAD !

Still, through the storied past, I sought  
An answer to my sleepless thought ;  
In the cloisters old and hoary  
Of the mediæval time —  
In the rude ancestral story  
Of the ancient Runic rhyme.

I paused on Grecian plains, to trace  
Some remnant of a mightier race,  
Serene in sorrow and in strife,  
Calm conquerors of Death and Life,  
Types of the god-like forms that shone  
Upon the sculptured Parthenon.

But still, as when Prometheus bare  
From heaven the fiery dart,  
I saw the "vulture passions" tear  
The proud Caucasian heart,<sup>1</sup> —  
The war of destiny with will  
Still conquered, yet conflicting still.

I heard loud Hallelujahs  
From Israel's golden lyre,  
And I sought their great Jehovah  
In the cloud and in the fire.  
I lingered by the stream that flowed  
"Fast by the oracle of God," —  
I bowed, its sacred wave to sip ; —  
Its waters fled my thirsting lip.  
The serpent trail was over all  
Its borders, — and its palms that threw  
Aloft their waving coronal,  
Were blistered by a poison dew.

Serenest elements I sought,  
Sublimest altitudes of thought,

<sup>1</sup> Gustav Klemm, in a work entitled *Allgemeine Culturgeschichte der Menschheit*, divides the human races into the active and passive : the former (embracing only the so-called Caucasian race) marked by restless activity and aspiration, progress and the spirit of doubt and inquiry ; the latter (comprising all the remaining races), by an absence or inferiority of these characteristics.

The truth Saint John and Plato saw,  
The mystic light, the inward law ;  
The Logos ever found and lost,  
The aureola of the Ghost.

I hailed its faint auroral beam  
In many a Poet's Delphic dream, —  
On many a shrine where faith's pure flame  
Through fable's gorgeous oriel came.

Around the altars of the god,  
In holy passion hushed, I trod,  
Where once the mighty voice of Jove  
Rang through Dodona's haunted grove.  
No more the dove with sable plumes<sup>1</sup>  
Swept through the forest's gorgeous glooms ;  
The shrines were desolate and cold,  
Their pæans hushed, their story told,  
In long, inglorious silence lost,  
Like fiery tongues of Pentecost.

No more did music's golden surge  
The mortal in immortal merge :

<sup>1</sup> "The priestesses of Dodona assert that two black pigeons flew from Thebes in Egypt ; one of which settled in Lybia, the other among themselves : which latter, resting on a beech-tree, declared with a human voice that here was to be the oracle of Jove." — HERODOTUS, Book II. ch. 55.

High canticles of joy and praise  
 Died with the dream of other days ;  
 I only heard the Mænad's wail, —  
 That shriek that made the orient pale :  
 Evohe ! — ah — Evohe !  
 The mystic burden of a woe  
 Whose dark enigma none may know ;<sup>1</sup>  
 The primal curse, — the primal throe.

Evohe ! — ah — Evohe !  
 Nature shuddered at the cry  
 Of that ancient agony !

Still the fabled Python bound me, —  
 Still the serpent coil inwound me, —  
 Still I heard the Mænad's cry,  
 Evohe ! — ah — Evohe !

<sup>1</sup> "The Mænads, in their wild incantations, carried serpents in their hands, and with frantic gestures cried out *Eva ! Eva !* Epiphanius thinks that this invocation related to the mother of mankind ; but I am inclined to believe that it was the word *Epha* or *Opha*, rendered by the Greeks, *Ophis*, a *serpent*. I take *Abaddon* to have been the name of the same ophite God whose worship has so long infected the world. The learned *Heinsius* makes *Abaddon* the same as the serpent *Python*."  
 — JACOB BRYANT'S *Analysis of Ancient Mythology*.

"While Mænads cry aloud *Evoe*, *Evoe* !  
 That voice that is contagion to the world."

SHELLEY'S *Prometheus*.

Where the Nile pours his sullen wave  
Through tombs and empires of the grave,  
I sought, 'mid cenotaphs, to find  
The earlier miracles of mind :  
Alas, beside the funeral urn  
How drearily the death-lights burn ;  
On dim Denderah's sculptured lore  
How sad the noonlight falls,  
How mournfully the west wind sighs  
Through Karnak's moldering halls !  
No tongue shall tell their wondrous tale,  
No hand shall lift the Isis veil ;  
The mighty pyramids that rise  
So drear along the morning skies,  
Guard well the secrets of the dead,  
Nor break the sleep of ages fled.

Their awful shadow passed, I stood  
On India's burning solitude ;  
Where, in the misty morning of the world,  
Life lay as in a dream of beauty furred.

I saw the mighty altars of the Sun, —  
Before whose fires the star-gods, one by one,  
Paled like thin ghosts, — in lurid splendors  
rife ;  
I heard the Persian hail him Lord of Life !

I saw his altar-flames rise wild and high,  
Veiling the glory of the noon-day sky,  
Hiding the holy heavens with their ensan-  
guined dye.

I turned, and from the Brahmin's milder law  
I sought truth's mystic element to draw,  
Pure as it sparkled in the cup of Heaven, —  
The bright Amreeta to the immortals given, —  
To bathe my soul in fontal springs, that lie  
Veiled from the careless and incurious eye.

Half wakened from the brooding sleep  
Of Nature ere she felt the leap  
Of sentient life, the Hindoo seemed  
Sad as the faith his fathers dreamed ;  
Like his own rock-hewn temples, wrought  
From some obscure and shadowy thought  
Of ancient days, — some formless dread,  
In the gray dawn of ages bred, —  
Prone on his native earth reclined,  
To endless reveries resigned,  
His dull soul lapsing on the Lethean stream,  
Lost in the dim world of a lotus dream.

Still, still the eternal mystery,  
The shadow of the poison-tree

Of Good and Evil haunted me.  
In Religion's holy name,  
Furies fed her altar-flame,  
Sophists gloried in her shame.  
Still the ancient mythus bound me,  
Still the serpent coil inwound me,  
Still I heard the Mænad's cry,  
Evohe ! — ah — Evohe !

Wearied with man's discordant creed,  
I sought on Nature's page to read  
Life's history, ere yet she shrined  
Her essence in the incarnate mind ;  
Intent her secret laws to trace  
In primal solitudes of space,  
From her first, faint atomic throes,  
To where her orbèd splendor glows  
In the vast, silent spheres that roll  
Forever towards their unknown goal.

I turned from dull alchemic lore  
With starry Chaldeans to soar,  
And sought, on fancy's wing, to roam  
That glorious galaxy of light  
Where mingling stars, like drifting foam,  
Melt on the solemn shores of night ;

But still the surging glory chased  
The dark through night's chaotic waste ;  
And still, within its deepening voids,  
Crumbled the burning asteroids.

Long gloating on that hollow gloom,  
Methought that in some vast maelstrom,  
The stars were hurrying to their doom, —  
Bubbles upon life's boundless sea,  
Swift meteors of eternity,  
Pale sparks of mystic fire, that fall  
From God's unwaning coronal.

Is there, I asked, a living woe  
In all those burning orbs that glow  
Through the blue ether ? — do they share  
Our dim world's anguish and despair ?  
In their vast orbits do they fly  
From some avenging destiny, —  
And shall their wild eyes pale beneath  
The dread anathema of Death ? —  
Our own fair Earth, — shall she too drift,  
Forever shrouded in a veft  
Of stormy clouds, that surge and swirl  
Around her in her dizzy whirl : —  
Forever shall a shadow fall  
Backward from her golden wall,

Its dark cone stretching, ghaſt and gray,  
Into outer glooms away?—

From the ſad, unſated queſt  
Of knowledge, how I longed to reſt  
On her green and ſilent breſt !

I languiſhed for the dewſ of death  
My fevered heart to ſteep, —  
The heavy, honey-dewſ of death,  
The calm and dreamleſſ ſleep.

I left my fruitleſſ lore apart,  
And leaned my ear on Nature's heart,  
To hear, far from life's buſy throng,  
The chime of her ſweet underſong.

She preſſed her balmy lips to mine,  
She bathed me in her ſylvan ſprings ;  
And ſtill, by many a rural ſhrine,  
She taught me ſweet and holy things.  
I felt her breath my temples fan,  
I learned her temperate laws to ſcan,  
My ſoul, of hers, became a conſcious part ;  
Her beauty melted through my inmoſt heart.

Still I languished for the word  
Her sweet lips had never spoken,  
Still, from the pale shadow-land,  
There came nor voice nor token ;  
No accent of the Holy Ghost  
Whispered of the loved and lost ;  
No bright wanderer came to tell  
If, in worlds beyond the grave,  
Life, love, and beauty dwell.

## EVENING.

“ And, it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light.”

ZECHARIAH xiv. 7.

“ All the dawn promised shall the day fulfill,  
The glory and the grandeur of each dream ;  
And every prophecy shall be achieved,  
And every joy conceded, prove a pledge  
Of some new joy to come.”

ROBERT BROWNING.

WILDER and lonelier grew the day :  
The vault of heaven once so high, —  
Fading to infinity, —  
Now bowed by its own weight of gloom,  
Seemed dark and low-browed as a tomb.  
Cold, sculptured hills, forlorn and gray,  
Like sun-forsaken Memnons, lay  
Around my drear and pathless way.  
The thunder rolled ; and loud and shrill  
The storm-blast shrieked from hill to hill.

Beside the lamp within the veil  
Of the soul's temple burning pale,

I sought, in self-renouncing prayer,  
Truth's guarded secrets to forbear,  
Till lowly trust the right should earn  
Life's golden meanings to discern.  
I sought in ministries of love  
The purchase of the Cross to prove, —  
The mysteries of the Holy Rood  
In sorrow's pale beatitude.  
Content, through lowering clouds, to greet  
The glory of the Paraclete ;  
I sought, within the inner shrine,  
The Father-God of Palestine.

A holy light began to stream  
Athwart the cloud-rifts, like a dream  
Of Heaven ; and lo ! a pale, sweet face,  
Of mournful grandeur and imperial grace, —  
A face whose mystic sadness seemed to borrow  
Immortal beauty from that mortal sorrow  
Looked on me ; and a voice of solemn cheer  
Uttered its sweet evangels on my ear ;  
The open secrets of that eldest lore  
That seems less to reveal than to restore.

“ Pluck thou the Life-tree's golden fruit,  
Nor seek to bare its sacred root :  
Live, and in life's perennial faith  
Renounce the heresy of death ;

Believe, and every sweet accord  
Of being, to thine ear restored,  
Shall sound articulate and clear ;  
Perfected love shall banish fear,  
Knowledge and wisdom shall approve  
The divine synthesis of love."

"Royally the lilies grow  
On the grassy leas,  
Basking in the sun and dew,  
Swinging in the breeze.  
Doth the wild-fowl need a chart  
Through the illimitable air ?  
Heaven lies folded in thy heart ;  
Seek the truth that slumbers there ;  
Thou art Truth's eternal heir."

"Let the shadows come and go ;  
Let the stormy north wind blow :  
Death's dark valley cannot bind thee  
In its dread abode ;  
There the Morning Star shall find thee,  
There the living God.  
Sin and sorrow cannot hide thee, —  
Death and hell cannot divide thee  
From the love of God."

In the mystic agony  
On the Mount of Calvary,  
The Saviour with his dying eyes  
Beheld the groves of Paradise.

“Then weep not by the charnel stone,  
Nor veil thine eyelids from the sun.  
Upward, through the death-dark glides  
The spirit on resurgent tides  
Of light and glory on its way :  
Wilt thou by the ceremonies stay ? —  
Thou the risen Christ shalt see  
In redeemed Humanity.  
Though mourners at the portal wept,  
And angels lingered where it slept,  
The soul but tarried for a night,  
Then plumed its wings for loftier flight.”

“Is thy heart so lonely ? — Lo,  
Ready to share thy joy and woe,  
Poor wanderers tarry at thy gate,  
The way-worn and the desolate ;  
And angels at thy threshold wait :  
Wouldst thou love’s holiest guerdon win ?  
Arise, and let the stranger in.”

“The friend whom not thy fickle will,  
But the deep heart within thee, still  
Yearneth to fold to its embrace,  
Shall seek thee through the realms of space.  
Keep the image Nature sealed  
On thy heart, by love annealed,  
Keep thy faith serene and pure ;  
Her royal promises are sure,  
Her sweet betrothals shall endure.”

“Hope thou all things, and believe ;  
And, in child-like trust, achieve  
The simplest mandates of the soul,  
The simplest good, the nearest goal ;  
Move but the waters, and their pulse  
The broad ocean shall convulse.”

“When love shall reconcile the will  
Love’s mystic sorrow to fulfill,  
Its fiery baptism to share, —  
The burden of its cross to bear, —  
Earth shall to equilibrium tend,  
Ellipses shall to circles bend,  
And life’s long agony shall end.”

“Then pluck the Life-tree’s golden fruit ;  
No blight can reach its sacred root.

E'en though every blossom fell  
Into Hades, one by one,  
Love is deeper far than Hades, —  
Shadows cannot quench the sun."

"Can the child-heart promise more  
Than the Father hath in store? —  
The blind shall see, — the dead shall live;  
Can the man-child forfeit more  
Than the Father can forgive?  
The Dragon, from his empire driven,  
No more shall find his place in Heaven,  
Till e'en the Serpent power approve  
The divine potency of love."

"Guard thy faith with holy care, —  
Mystic virtues slumber there;  
'T is the lamp within the soul  
Holding genii in control:  
Faith shall walk the stormy water, —  
In the unequal strife prevail, —  
Nor, when comes the dread avatar,  
From its fiery splendors quail.  
Faith shall triumph o'er the grave,  
Love shall bless the life it gave."

I heard; and in my heart the incarnate Word  
Uttered, serene and clear, its sweet accord, —

To Him that sitteth on the eternal throne,  
All power and grace earth's discord to  
atone, —

To the great Soul that foldeth all in one,  
Father in Heaven, I cried, thy will be done !

Then faintly, with my heart's low music blend-  
ing,

I heard a sound of silver wings descending :  
The Holy Dove of Peace, the promised guest,  
Folded its fragrant pinions on my breast.

Life into lines of beauty flowed  
Around me, flexuous and free ;  
The passive face of Nature showed  
A sweet, responsive sympathy ;  
And dimly, through the Human, glowed  
The lineaments of Deity.

I saw the frowning orbs of Fate  
Into a regent calm dilate —  
A sovran and superb disdain  
Of earth's fast-fleeting joy and pain ;  
While patience budding into peace,  
And knowledge ripening into power,  
And thought with its pale alchemy,  
Made beautiful the passing hour ;

Till morn and noonlight seemed to fuse  
Their glory with its fading hues,  
As the fair outline of my day,  
From dawn to twilight's golden gray,  
Rose grandly on the prescient soul,  
Crowned with the sunset's aureole.

Far off, among the Norland hills,  
The distant thunders rolled ;  
Soft rain-clouds dipped their fringes down  
Across the evening gold.  
Heaven's stormy dome was rent, and high  
Above me shone the summer sky ;  
Ever more serene it grew,  
Fading off into the blue,  
Till the boundless hyaline  
Seemed melting into depths divine,  
And the angels came and went  
Through the opening firmament.  
In all the glooming hollows lay  
A light more beautiful than day ;  
All the blossom bells waved slowly  
In the evening's golden calm,  
And the hum of distant voices  
Sounded like a vesper psalm.

Till dimly seen, through day's departing bloom,  
The far-off lamps of heaven began to fling  
Their trembling beams athwart the dewy  
gloom,

As Evening, on the horizon's airy ring,  
Winnowing the darkness with her silver wing,  
Descended like an angel, calm and still.



ADDITIONAL POEMS.



## SONNETS.

TO ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

### I.

"O perpetui fiori  
Dell' eterna letizia!"

IL PARADISO.

FAIR Sibyl, sitting in thy "House of Clouds,"  
Shrined, like some solitary star, above  
The dull, cold shadow that our earth enshrouds,  
How oft my spirit looks to thee in love!  
To thy "Lost Bower" how oft in dreams re-  
turning,  
I see thee standing in the sylvan room,—  
See the red sun-light in the rose-cups burning,  
And the sweet blue-bells nodding through  
the gloom:  
Again I hear thy grand and solemn dirges  
To the dim "Gods of Hellas," like the breeze  
O'er lone savannas sighing, or the surges  
That wash the sands of solitary seas;  
Then, in calm waves of glory, swells the strain,  
"Christ from the dead hath risen and shall  
reign!"

## II.

“ Ad una vista  
D'un gran palazzo Michol ammirava  
Si come donna dispettosa e trista.”

IL PURGATORIO.

SOMETIMES I see thee, pale with scorn and sorrow,

At a great palace window, looking forth,  
To-day on plumèd Florentines, — to-morrow  
Upon the hireling legions of the North :  
Sometimes o'er little children bending lowly,  
To hear their cry, in the dark factories  
drowned ;

Ah, then thy pitying brow grows sweet and  
holy,

With a saint's aureole of sorrow crowned !  
But most I love thee when that mystic glory —  
Kindling at horrors that abhor the day —  
Sheds a wild, stormy splendor o'er the story  
Of the dark fugitive, who turned away  
To death's cold threshold, calm in death's disdain,

From the “ White Pilgrim's Rock,” beside  
the western main.

## III.

"Or discendiamo omai a maggior pieta."

L'INFERNO.

AY, most I love thee when thy starry song  
Stoops to the plague-spot that we dare not  
name,

And bares with burning breath the envenomed  
wrong —

Our country's dark inheritance of shame.  
When our blaspheming synods look thereon,  
Stifling God's law and Nature's noble ires  
With the cold ashes of dead council-fires,  
That Gorgon terror chills them into stone.  
Yet while they cringe and palter, thy true  
heart,

Serene in love's own light and woman's ruth,  
Loyal to God and to God's living truth,  
Hath uttered words whose fulgent rays shall  
dart

Like sunbeams through our land's Tartarean  
gloom,  
Till freedom's holy law its Stygian depths il-  
lume.

## TO PERDITA.

WHAT holds thy dreamy eyes in thrall ?  
A sombre picture on the wall ;<sup>1</sup>  
A sombre picture, weird and cold,  
That dims the daylight's morning gold.

A grass-grown rampart, lifting high  
Its reedy fringe against the sky ;  
Half lost in its o'ershadowing gloom,  
The semblance of a moldering tomb ;  
Upon the tablet, side by side,  
In pomp of old heraldic pride,  
Two sculptured figures lying stark  
And dumb within the glimmering dark ;  
A raven on the moldering tomb ;  
An owlet flitting through the gloom ;  
A cold, white, wandering moon, that seems  
The ghost of long-forgotten dreams ;  
In the high rampart an old door,  
Where night winds enter : nothing more.

<sup>1</sup> Midnight. By G. H. Boughton.

Why doth it hold thine eyes in thrall,  
This sombre picture on the wall,  
That dims the daylight's glad return,  
And shrineth darkness like an urn ?

Is there within thy heart a grave  
O'er which the winds of memory wave,  
Where, sepulchred in marble pride,  
Thy dead hopes slumber, side by side,  
Lost to the future's dawning light,  
And shrined in immemorial night ?

Ah ! never hope of thine shall sleep  
Within oblivion's donjon-keep.  
Thy dreams were born to soar afar  
Beyond the morning's purple star ;  
Thy loyal heart shall re-create  
From loss and wrong a loftier fate ;  
Thy own deep heart of love illumine  
Thy life with love's immortal bloom.  
On thy white brow, absolved from blame,  
A shining stone, with a new name,  
Shall flood the dark with living flame ;  
Thy life, a perfume and a prayer,  
With mystic fragrance fill the air,  
And all thy buried hopes shall rise  
Transfigured into destinies.

## A PANSY FROM THE GRAVE OF KEATS.

“That’s for thoughts!”—SHAKESPEARE.

THREE velvet petals darkly spread  
In sumptuous sorrow for the dead,  
Superbly sombre as a pall  
Wrought for an elfin funeral ;  
Two, hued like wings of silver light  
Unfurled for Psyche’s heavenward flight ;  
And every petal, o’er and o’er,  
All legended with faery lore,  
A palimpsest of fables old  
And mythic stories manifold.

Endymion in enchanted swoon  
Tranced by the melancholy moon ;  
And, hovering near, the crescent-crowned  
Diana, with her sylvan hound ;—  
The virgin huntress, proud and pale,  
Betrayed to passion’s blissful bale,  
Till all her beautiful disdain  
Is lost in love’s imperial pain.

Sad, star-eyed Lamia's serpent spell,  
And the wild dirge of Isabel.

Hyperion in his palace bright,  
Bastioned with pyramids of light,  
Kindling the dawn with fiery breath,  
Battling with Darkness and with Death, —  
The pregnant fable left half told, —  
A fading blush of morning gold.

The story of St. Agnes' Eve,  
The tale where legioned fairies weave  
Their spells within the moonlit gloom  
Of Madeline's enchanted room.  
The casement, triple-arched and high,  
Enwrought with antique tracery, —

The blazoned window's gorgeous panes  
That blush with old heraldic stains ;  
The brodered kirtle on the floor,  
The jeweled casket's gleaming store ;  
The chamber, silken, hushed and chill,  
Where Madeline lies dreaming still,  
Lost in the lap of legends old,  
And curtained from the moonlight cold,  
Till, lowly kneeling at her side,  
The minstrel-lover woos his bride.

I hear afar the wassail roar  
Surge through the distant corridor,  
As through the ancient, bannered halls  
The midnight music swells and falls ;  
The castle lamps are all aglow ;  
The silver-snarling trumpets blow.  
'T was ages, ages long ago,  
The vigil of St. Agnes' Night,  
The ruse, the revel, and the flight ;  
But, till love's faery lore be past,  
The charm of Agnes' Eve shall last.

The poet sleeps, and pansies bloom  
Beside his far Italian tomb ;  
The turf is heaped above his bed ;  
The stone is moldering at his head ;  
But each fair creature of his dream,  
Transferred to daylight's common beam,  
Lives the charmed life that waneth never,  
A Beauty and a Joy forever.

## APPLE-BLOOMS.

TO CARRIE, BY HER COUSIN.

You had been robbing apple-trees, —  
Robbing rosy apple-trees, —  
Stealing from the honey-bees

Stores of sweetness, while I lay,  
In the twilight's tender gray,  
Dreaming of orchards far away, —

Pale orchard blooms that fell like rain  
Upon a far-off phantom plain, —  
Dear days that would not dawn again,

And May-moons that would rise no more :  
When softly through the open door  
A cloud of perfume seemed to pour,

And then I saw two faces loom  
Through tufts of pearly apple-bloom,  
Filling with rose-light all the room, —

Two fair young faces, smiling through  
The pink-white blossoms, and I knew  
The May-queen's messengers in you.

I knew the orchard slopes were fair, —  
I knew the winds that lingered there  
O'er-swept them with enchanted air !

I saw the branches toss and swing,  
Heard the bee's elfin bugle ring,  
And owned the presence of the Spring.

*May, 1860.*

## NIGHT WANES.

NIGHT wanes : the nation's travail, throe by  
throe,

Brings on the hour that shall absolve her  
sin ;

And the great, solemn bells, now swinging slow,  
With tales of murder in their iron din,  
Shall ring the years of peace and freedom  
in.

Be patient, O my heart ; look through the  
gloom

Of the sad present, look through all the past,  
And learn how, out of sin and death and  
doom,

And mournful tragedies, august and vast,  
The world's great victories are achieved at  
last.

Look far away ; count all the triumphs bought  
By martyred saints, found worthy to atone  
For others' sin, see life from death outwrought,  
And know each blast from War's wild bugle  
blown  
Shall melt in music round the "Great White  
Throne."

1861.

## NIGHT AND STORM.

I SAW the waning August moon  
Rise o'er the rocky shore,  
And on a sad and stormy sea  
Its lurid crimson pour.

My window opened to the east,  
And far and far away,  
I saw the headlong billows breast  
The breakers of the bay.

The broad red sea seemed like a field  
Where charging squadrons go :  
I heard the clang of spear and shield,  
I heard the clarions blow.

Near me the dancers' flying feet,  
With sounds of harp and horn,  
And wild waltz-music, madly sweet,  
Were on the night-winds borne.

Rich voices lingered on the ear,  
And laughter floated by,

And many a call of merry cheer,  
And many a glad reply.

I only watched the trampling feet  
Of waves upon the shore ;  
I only heard their war-drums beat,  
Their plunging batteries roar.

I thought on many a bannered plain,  
On battles lost and won,  
On homes bereft and heroes slain,  
And armies marching on.

The wild waltz-music died away,  
The laughter and the glee,  
But all night long a stormy song  
Seemed sounding from the sea :

A wail of trumpets in the air,  
A dead march on the wave,  
Wild tones of triumph or despair  
O'er all our martyred brave.

I hailed Jehovah's fiery sword  
In battles lost and won ;  
I hailed the armies of the Lord  
And heard them marching on.

OCEAN HOUSE, Cape Elizabeth, *August*, 1863.

## DON ISLE.

Cromwell's siege of the sea-girt castle and fortress of Don Isle, which was heroically defended by a female descendant of Nicholas Le Poer, Baron of Don Isle, is, as represented by Sir Bernard Burke in his *Romance of Irish History*, full of legendary interest.

LONELY beneath the silent stars  
It stands, a gray and moldering pile,  
Wreck'd in the wild Cromwellian wars,  
The sea-girt castle of Don Isle.  
The wild waves beat the castle wall,  
And bathe the rock with ceaseless showers;  
Dark heaving billows plunge and fall  
In whitening foam beneath the towers.

High beetling o'er the headland's brow  
All seam'd and battle-scarr'd it stands,  
And rents and gaping ruins show  
The ravage of the spoiler's hands.  
Two hundred years have rolled away,  
And still, at twilight's haunted hour,  
A ghostly lady seems to stray  
By ruined barbican and tower.

Dauntless within her lone domain  
She held at bay her father's foe,  
Till faithless followers fired the train  
That laid her feudal fortress low.  
Afar her exiled kinsmen roam ;  
She perished in the smoldering pile,  
The last of all her house and home,  
The lonely lady of Don Isle.

The gray moss gathers on the wall,  
And slow beneath the silent stars  
The crumbling turrets waste and fall  
Wrecked in the wild Cromwellian wars :  
And peasants round their evening fire  
With many a tale the hours beguile,  
Of warrior ghosts and spectres dire  
That haunt the castle of Don Isle.

## NIGHTFALL ON THE SEACONNET SHORE.

TO R. D. S.

WE sat together, you and I,  
And watched the daylight's dying bloom,  
And saw the great white ships go by,  
Like phantoms through the gathering gloom.

Like phantom lights the lonely stars  
Looked through the sea-fog's ghastly veil,  
Beyond the headland's rocky bars  
We heard the stormy surges wail.

We sat together, hand in hand,  
Upon the lonely, sea-girt wall,  
And watched along the glimmering strand,  
The wild, white breakers plunge and fall.

You spoke of pleasures past away,  
Of hopes that left the heart forlorn,  
Of life's unrest and love's decay,  
And lonely sorrows proudly borne.

The sea's phantasmal sceneries  
 Commingled with your mournful theme ;  
 The splendors of your starry eyes  
 Were drowned in memory's deepening  
 dream.

Darker and lonelier grew the night  
 Along the horizon's dreary verge,  
 And lonelier through the lessening light  
 Sang the wild sea-wind's wailing dirge.

When, kindling through the gathering gloom,  
 Beyond West-Island's beetling brow,  
 Where breakers dash, and surges boom,  
 We saw Point Judith's fires aglow.

Piercing night's solemn mystery,  
 The light-house reared its lonely form,  
 Serene above the weltering sea  
 And guardant through the gathering storm.

So, o'er the sea of life's unrest,  
 Through grief's wild storm, and sorrow's  
 gloom,  
 Faith's heavenly pharos in the breast  
 Lights up the dark with deathless bloom.

The sea-born sadness of the hour  
Melted beneath its holy spell ;  
Faith blossomed into perfect flower,  
And our hearts whispered, " All is well."

1864.

## TO "SHIRLEY:"

The good Santa Claus who sent me David Gray's Poems.

DEAR Santa Claus, your reindeer hoof  
Fell soft as snow-flakes on the roof  
That spanned my hall of dreams last night,  
And when I woke, the morning light  
Was lovelier, and the wintry day  
More fair for you and David Gray :  
His summer moons, his autumn nights,  
The glamour of his sunset lights,  
His red dawns and their rosy glow  
On the white wonder of the snow ;  
The sadness of his poet-soul  
That looked beyond life's mortal goal,  
For the great glory that should pour,  
Through golden death's immortal door.

Entranced I lie the livelong day,  
Dreaming of you and David Gray, —  
Dreaming I see the daylight fade  
Across the castled palisade

Of sunset clouds ; it dies and dies  
Into diviner harmonies.  
Sweet, haunting faces light the gloom  
Of twilight in my lonely room, —  
Proud poet-faces, sad and stern,  
To whom earth gave a marble urn  
That could nor life nor love restore :  
This, "only this, and nothing more!"

The page grows dim, and solemn night,  
Drops her rich curtain o'er the light,  
Till, fold on fold, its dusky fall  
Shuts out the far horizon wall :  
The stars begin to glint and spark  
Across the purple of the dark,  
And all the happy winter day,  
Made fair through you and David Gray,  
Melts in a heavenly dream away !

*December 25, 1865.*

## PROSERPINE TO PLUTO IN HADES.

"Nec repetita sequi curet Proserpina matrem."

VIRGIL, *Georg.* I. 39.

I THINK on thee amid these spring-time flowers,  
On thee, my emperor, my sovran lord,  
Dwelling alone in dim Tartarean towers  
Of thy dark realm, by earth and heaven ab-  
horred,  
Wandering afar by that Avernian river  
Where dead kings walk and phantoms wail for-  
ever.

I think on thee in that stern palace regnant,  
Where no sweet voice of summer charms the  
air,  
Where the vast solitude seems ever pregnant  
With some wild dream of unfortold despair.  
Thy love, remembered, doth heaven's light  
eclipse ;  
I feel thy lingering kisses on my lips.

I languish for the late autumnal showers,  
The cool, cool plashing of the autumn rain,  
The shimmering hoar-frost and fast-fading flow-  
ers,  
That give me back to thy dark realm again :  
To thee I'll bring Sicilia's starry skies  
And all the heaven of summer in my eyes.

When from earth's noontide beauty borne away  
To the pale prairies of that under world,  
A mournful flower upon thy breast I lay  
Till round thy heart its clinging tendrils  
curled —  
A frightened dove, that tamed its fluttering pin-  
ion  
To the dear magic of thy love's dominion.

For thou wert grandly beautiful as night,  
Stern Orcus, in thy realm of buried kings ;  
And thy sad crown of cypress in my sight  
Fairer than all the bright and flowery rings  
Of wreathèd poppies and of golden corn  
By Ceres on her stately temples worn.

I sat beside thee on Hell's dusky throne,  
Nor feared the awful shadow of thy fate ;  
Content to share the burden of thy crown,  
And all the mournful splendors of thy state ;

Bending my flower-like beauty to thy will,  
Seeking with light thy lonely dark to fill.

Wondering, I think how thy dear love hath  
bound me

In a new life that half forgets the old ;  
All day I haunt the meadows where you found  
me,

Knee-deep in daffodils of dusky gold,  
Or sit by Cyane's sad fountain, dreaming  
Of the red lake by thy proud palace gleaming.

When, in her car by wingèd dragons borne,  
Pale Ceres sought me through the shudder-  
ing night,

With angry torches and fierce eyes, forlorn,  
Slaying the dark that screened me from her  
sight,

Like a reft lioness that rends the air  
Of midnight with her perilous despair;

Jove, pitying the great passion of her woe,  
Gave back thy queen-bride to the mother's  
grief —

To Ceres gave — through summer's golden  
glow

And all the crescent months, from spear to  
sheaf :

Alas, how sadly in Sicilian bowers  
I pass this lonely, lingering time of flowers !

In the long silence of the languid noons,  
    When all the panting birds are faint with  
        heat,  
I wander listless by the blue lagoons  
    To hear their light waves rippling at my feet  
Through the dead calm, and count the linger-  
        ing time  
By the slow pulsing of their silver chime.

I languish for the late autumnal showers,  
    The cool, cool plashing of the autumn rain,  
The shimmering hoar-frost and fast-fading  
        flowers,  
    That give me back to thy dark realm again :  
I have no native land from thee apart,  
And my high heaven of heavens is in thy heart.

## THE TYPHON.

"Typhon, dread demon from the realms below,  
The dark, mysterious cause of every woe,  
The racking ague and the fever throe! "

WHEN the green leaves to golden bronze were  
turning,  
And earth lay parched beneath the October sun,  
A sullen fever in my veins was burning,  
While life and death seemed melting into  
one.

At eventide the cheerful embers glowing  
Through the cool chamber turned to fires  
of doom ;  
In the white draperies o'er the windows flowing  
Lurked sheeted phantoms from the nether  
gloom.

Great, gorgon heads and stony faces only  
Looked out from all the pictures on the  
wall ;

The quaint sequestered room grew vast and  
lonely

As the wide vaulted arch of Vathek's hall ;

The walls, now fading into endless distance,  
Now narrowing round me to a low-browed  
cave,

Where in a living death without resistance  
I lay as in the hollow of a grave.

Strange life in death ! that left my soul to  
wander

Long ages in a dim sepulchral pile,  
The legend of forgotten lives to ponder  
On footworn marbles of the moldering aisle.

My vanished years were there — a long suc-  
cession

Of sultry summers severed by the snows  
Of endless winters, while some dark obsession  
Forced me to read the record to its close.

Day followed day and night to night succeeded,  
And still the powers of darkness reigned  
supreme ;

A smoldering fire the pulse of life impeded,  
And all my past seemed one long fever  
dream.

Then the foul Typhon fled. A wondrous glory  
Flooded the world with health's returning  
tide,  
And all the sorrows of life's mystic story  
Were but as wandering clouds through  
moonlit heavens that glide.

1865.

## CHRISTMAS EVE.

TO MY LITTLE FRIENDS AT NEW ROCHELLE.

LET fall the curtains, drop the shades ;  
Behind the hills the twilight fades ;  
The sullen rain-drops, heavily,  
In the dank, drooping hemlocks lie ;  
The fir-trees in the rounding park  
Loom statelier through the gathering dark,  
And reddening in the starless night  
The tall church windows blaze with light.  
The north wind whistles down the glades ;  
Let fall the curtains, drop the shades,  
And, while the fire-light's glowing gloom  
Casts fitful shadows through the room,  
Gather around the ruddy blaze  
To welcome in the holidays.

See Haidee's dark brown eyes grow bright  
As diamonds in the dancing light,  
To hear the merry bells that ring  
In the tall steeples, — ding dong ding ;

While Rena's songs sound sweet and rare  
As music heard in mountain air,  
And Ethel, with cheeks all abloom,  
Goes dancing, dancing round the room,  
Or softly lingers at my knee  
To watch the wondrous Christmas Tree.

Sweet Christmas Eve! The holidays  
May pass, the firelight's cheerful blaze  
Die out, the little waltzing feet  
To other mazy measures beat,  
And other Christmas Trees may spread  
Their fragrant branches o'er my head,  
And fairy fruit for us may fall  
In many a distant bower and hall,  
And Santa Claus at Christmas tide  
May down the roaring chimneys ride,  
And chapel bells with solemn chime  
Ring in the Christ-child's holy time,  
And tell to all the wondering Earth  
The mystic story of his birth;  
But memory long shall fondly dwell  
On this blithe eve at New Rochelle,  
And fairer deem our Christmas Tree  
Than all that have been or may be,  
And keep the birthnight it embalms  
Sweet as the breath of heavenly palms.

*December, 1866.*

## SANTA CLAUS.

A HEALTH to good old Santa Claus,  
And to his reindeer bold,  
Whose hoofs are shod with eider-down,  
Whose horns are tipped with gold.

He comes from utmost fairy-land  
Across the wintry snows ;  
He makes the fir-tree and the spruce  
To blossom like the rose.

Over the quaint old gables,  
Over the windy ridge,  
By turret wall and chimney tall,  
He guides his fairy sledge ;

Along the sleeping house-tops  
Its silver runners trend,  
All loaded down with wonder-books  
And tales without an end.

He steals upon the slumbers  
Of little rose-lipped girls,  
And lays his waxen dollies down  
Beside their golden curls.

He scatters blessings on his way  
And sugar-coated plums.  
He robs the sluggard of his rest,  
With trumpets, guns, and drums.

Small feet, before the dawn of day,  
Are marching to and fro,  
Drums beat to arms through all the house,  
And penny trumpets blow.

A health to brave old Santa Claus,  
And to his reindeer bold,  
Whose hoofs are shod with eider-down,  
Whose horns are tipped with gold.

He tells us of the yule-log  
That blazed in Saxon halls,  
Of the marchpane and the mistletoe,  
And the minstrels' merry calls ;

Of Christmas candles burning bright  
In ages long ago ;

Those long dark ages when the world  
Turned round so very slow.

He comes from utmost fairy-land  
Across the wintry snows ;  
He makes the fir-tree and the spruce  
To blossom like the rose.

He lingers till the Christmas bells,  
With sweet and solemn chime,  
Come sounding o'er the centuries  
Through years of war and crime.

Ring out, ring out, sweet Christmas bells !  
Ring loud and silver clear !  
Ring peace on earth, good will to man,  
Till all the world shall hear !

*December, 1867.*

## OUR LAST WALK.

TO R. B. B.

THE October day was dying, the dark sea  
    Flushed crimson at the coming of the sun ;  
The ripened year lay drowsing on the lea,  
    Like a tired reaper when his task is done.

Slowly we loitered o'er the twilight wold,  
    Through velvet sheep-walks, and where reedy  
        plumes  
And nodding fern tufts, tipt with tawny gold,  
    Fringe the dank borders where the gentian  
        blooms.

The very crickets seemed to drone and dream,  
    As if they felt the sweet mysterious charm  
Of the hushed evening, and attuned their  
    theme  
To its low cadences of slumberous calm.

With scarlet hips and sprays of purpling leaves  
The brier-rose in the bosky thickets burned,  
The maples flamed beneath the forest eaves,  
And their cold gloom to sudden splendor  
turned.

The level sunbeams glinted through the trees  
And flecked with arrowy light their verdant  
mold,  
And bound red baldricks round their gnarled  
knees,  
And fringed the tufted knolls with raveled  
gold.

Our woodland path was dim with tender dreams  
Of the past summer, and a pensive gloom,  
Lit by the rosy sunset's dying gleams,  
Filled the long arches of our sylvan room :

Sweet haunting memories of our golden noons,  
Our twilight wanderings by the lonely shore,  
Our August mornings, our September noons,  
Our long, sweet, summer days that are no  
more.

We sat together by the sunset sea,  
Screened from its solemn splendors by a wall

Of beech and oak and many a tangled tree  
Of the witch-elms that over-roofed our hall.

It was your birthnight, and close-clasped in  
mine

I held your hand, and blessed the imperial  
hour

That sheathed your spirit in a mortal shrine,  
And gave to bloom on earth a thornless  
flower.

## OUR HAUNTED ROOM.

TO E. N. G.

“Oh life! infinite life! the beautiful gates unfold!  
The shadowless light that knows no night  
Breaks over the city of gold!  
I rise on invisible pinions.  
I breathe an ineffable breath!  
Oh, life! rivers of life! for me there is no more death!”

*[Last lines of Elizabeth N. Gladding, who died of malarial fever,  
while teaching the freedmen at St. Helena Island, S. C., July, 1867.]*

HERE, where thy presence, like a rare,  
Sweet perfume, lingers everywhere,  
Elusive shadows haunt the air.

The dimly-pictured walls expand  
To mountain sceneries, wild and grand,  
Where war-worn castles proudly stand, —

Bastions and barbicans that gleam  
In the old mirror's crystal stream,  
Like far-off palaces of dream.

A censer, curiously enwrought,  
That burned in some barbaric court,  
Drowsed in the Orient's dusky thought,

On the long centuries seems to brood,  
When in Mongolian halls it stood,  
Breathing of myrrh and sandal wood.

From an amphora, quaint and tall,  
Funereal mosses float and fall,  
And waver down the chamber wall,

Dark southern mosses that have hung  
The wild sea-island woods among,  
And o'er their deep morasses swung.

The hands that twined with flexile grace  
Their garlands round my flower-lipped vase,  
Shrouding the corbel's sculptured face,

Fair-folded in a southern clime,  
Absolved from all the toils of time,  
Await the eternal morning's prime :

Fair-folded by the Atlantic wave,  
'Mid the dark race she died to save,  
Where homeless sea-winds haunt her grave.

But when the sunset fires are low,  
And twilight fancies come and go,  
And mystic winds of memory blow, —

When the heart feels its courage fail,  
Its visioned hopes without avail,  
Untouched, unfound its Holy Grail, —

Some solemn rapture, like a strain  
Of music's beautiful disdain,  
Uplifts beyond all mortal pain :

A sudden splendor rifts the gloom, —  
A light that seems to bud and bloom  
From out the shadows of the room :

A silken stir anear the door,  
Like rose-leaves rippling o'er the floor,  
And lo ! glad-smiling, as of yore,

Close at my side I see thee stand  
In shining garments, ghostly grand,  
A palm-branch budding in thy hand,

And, sweet as morning's music breath  
Across the hills of Nazareth,  
A low voice murmurs, " No more death ! "

## MEMORIAL HYMN.

WRITTEN FOR THE DEDICATION OF THE RHODE  
ISLAND SOLDIERS' AND SAILORS' MONUMENT.

RAISE the proud pillar of granite on high,  
Graced with all honors that love can impart ;  
Lift its fair sculptures against the blue sky,  
Blazoned and crowned with the trophies of  
art, —  
Crowned with the triumphs of genius and  
art !  
Long may its white column soar to the  
sky,  
Like a lone lily that perfumes the mart,  
Lifting its coronal beauty on high.

Sons of Rhode Island, your record shall stand  
Graven on tablets of granite and bronze ;  
Soldiers and sailors, beloved of our land,  
Darlings and heroes, our brothers and sons, —

Gray-bearded heroes and beautiful sons !  
Soldiers and sailors, the flower of our land,  
Deep as on tablets of granite and bronze,  
Graved on our hearts shall your bright record stand.

Swell the loud psalm, let the war trumpets  
sound ;

Fling the old flag to the wild autumn blast ;  
High in Valhalla our comrades are crowned ;  
There may we meet when life's conflicts are  
past, —

Meet in the great Hall of Heroes at last !

High in Valhalla our comrades are  
crowned.

Swell with Hosannas the wild autumn  
blast !

Let the full chorus of voices resound !

*September 16, 1871.*

## A BUNCH OF GRAPES.

PAINTED BY E. C. LEAVITT.

"Such as lurked behind the trees  
In gardens of Hesperides."

ON a sultry night in June,  
In the trances of the moon,  
Came a sudden thunder-squall  
Crashing through the lindens tall ;  
Every grape-vine was blown down,  
Every rose-tree lost its crown,  
Jagged lightning, sheeted rain,  
Dashed athwart the window pane.

Then a gust swept through the hall,  
A sudden splendor rent the pall  
Of darkness ; — by its dazzling glare  
I saw a stranger standing there,  
With beaded raindrops in his hair.  
Over eyes of dusky sheen  
Vine-wreaths wove a leafy screen,

Such as crowns the marble brow  
Of Bacchus in the busts we know ;  
Such, at least, I *seemed* to see, —  
Perchance the lightning blinded me.

Then a hand of plastic power,  
Cool and dripping with the shower,  
Dropped within my hand a bunch  
Of grapelets, fit for Juno's lunch ;  
Grapes by Orient sunbeams kissed  
Into globes of amethyst ;  
Such as haughty Guinevere  
Flung into the haunted mere ;  
Jewels for some queenly head,  
In the purple born and bred ;  
Every dark globe veined with fire,  
    Like the brown cheek of a gypsy ;  
Lucent drops of love and ire,  
    Such as made the Mænads tipsy ;  
Every purple bead a gem  
For Alraschid's diadem ;  
Each a miracle of art,  
Fit to charm a poet's heart.

Dazed I stood, without a word,  
And the silence was unstirred

Save by storm winds sweeping o'er us,  
And the thunder's hollow chorus,  
As he vanished from my sight,  
In the wild and lonesome night.

Was it Bacchus? Who can tell?  
If not he, 't was — E. C. L.

1872.

## THE OLD MIRROR.

OFT I see at twilight,  
In the hollow gloom  
Of the dim old mirror,  
Phantasmal faces loom :

Noble antique faces,  
Sad as with the weight  
Of some ancient sorrow,  
Some ancestral fate :

Little rose-lipped faces,  
Locks of golden shine,  
Laughing eyes of childhood  
Looking into mine :

Sweet auroral faces,  
Like the morning's bloom ;  
Ah, how long and long ago  
Shrouded for the tomb !

In a bridal chamber  
Once the mirror hung ;  
Draperies of Indian looms  
Over it were flung.

From its gilded sconces,  
Fretted now with mold,  
Waxen tapers glimmered  
On carcanets of gold.

Perfumes of the summer night  
Were through the lattice blown,  
Scents of brier roses  
And meadows newly mown.

The mirror then looked eastward  
And caught the morning bloom,  
And flooded with its rosy gold  
The dreamlight of the room.

To-night 't is looking westward  
Toward the sunset wall ;  
The wintry day is waning,  
The dead leaves drift and fall.

All about the hearth-stone  
The whitening ashes blow,

The wind is wailing an old song  
Heard long and long ago.

Like the dead leaves drifting  
Through the wintry air,  
Like white ashes sifting  
O'er the hearth-stone bare,

Sad ancestral faces,  
Wan as moon-lit snow,  
Haunt the dim old mirror  
That knew them long ago.

## THE NIGHT BLOOMING CEREUS.

A NOCTURNE, FOR M. A.

A JULY evening, damp and cold ;  
Over the dim horizon wall  
Low clouds their heavy draperies rolled,  
Till darkness gathered like a pall  
Around me, and the shadowy room  
Grew slumberous with its weight of gloom.

Heard I a step ? — or had I dreamed ?  
Strange perfume through the chamber  
streamed,  
A phantom flower was in my hand  
From some far off enchanted land.  
Wondering, I placed it where a low  
Lamp gleamed, like moonlight over snow.  
The winds were hushed, the night was still,  
The very silence seemed to thrill  
With that strange effluence.

Filled with awe,  
In rapt and wondering mood I saw  
The mystic lily, pure and cold,  
Whose beauty never knew the sun,  
Its vestal garniture unfold,  
Till slowly, slowly, one by one,  
Its lucent petals fall apart,  
Unveiling all its virgin heart!  
From what far heights of glory came  
That coronal of silver flame?  
From what deep fount of wonder welled  
The holy gold its chalice held?

Strange marvel of the summer night,  
Veiled in an aureole of light,  
To vanish ere the morning hour!  
Gazing upon thy magic flower,  
With such superfluous beauty fraught, —  
Owning the presence of a power  
Beyond the reaches of our thought, —  
Almost the gazer fears to guess  
The mystery of thy loveliness.

“A PAT OF BUTTER.”

TO EMILIA.

YELLOW as the cups of gold,  
Peering through the springtime mold,  
Sweeter than a breath of clover  
Blowing the June meadows over. —  
Butter, such as Goethe said  
Werter saw his Charlotte spread  
For her sisters and her brothers,  
And, perhaps, for a few others,  
Till it turned her lover's head ;  
Such as sweet Red Riding Hood,  
By that wicked wolf pursued,  
Through the enchanted forest bore  
To her grandam's fatal door.  
'T is the ashen time of Lent.  
Well, I know some fairy sent  
This, for my soul's nourishment :  
Well I know a fairy churned  
The creamy lactage till it turned

To golden gobbets ; that a dame  
Of gracious presence, known to fame  
By her sweet baptismal name  
Of Emilia (Emily),  
Pressed it into shape for me  
With her jeweled fingers.

Say you :

"This is all a dream ?" I pray you,  
Then, in sober truth to tell me  
Has your huckster some to sell me ?  
Tell me, tell me, I implore,  
What's his number ? Where's his store ?

1877.

## EPIGÆA.

—"Pink with promises of spring."

"I WANDERED lonely as a cloud"  
Along the busy, bustling street,  
Unmindful of the alien crowd  
That passed me by with hurrying feet :  
I knew not 't was an April day,  
So chill the winds that blew this way.

When, at a crossing of the flags  
A wanderer from the woods I met,  
With willow wands and alder tags  
And tufts of pink arbutus, wet  
With April dews and showers, that fell  
Around them in some far-off dell,  
And redolent of the rich loam  
That fed them in their forest home —  
Strange perfume, in whose effluence broods  
The wild, sweet spirit of the woods —  
Bringing remembrance of old days,

Of spring-time wanderings through a maze  
Of mossy, winding, woodland ways,  
Or, o'er some brown hill's hoary side  
Where the shy May-flower loves to hide.

Then, with a glinting of surprise  
In the cool shadow of his eyes,  
The woodman touched me with his wand  
And turned the street to Fairy-land!  
"Well met," he cried; "I have a few  
Tufts of arbutus. These for *you*."  
*April, 1876.*

## “SCIENCE.”

“The words ‘vital force,’ ‘instinct,’ ‘soul,’ are only expressions of our ignorance.” — BUCHNER.

WHILE the dull Fates sit nodding at their loom,  
Benumbed and drowsy with its ceaseless boom,  
I hear, as in a dream, the monody  
Of life's tumultuous, ever-ebbing sea ;  
The iron tramp of armies hurrying by  
Forever and forever but to die ;  
The tragedies of time, the dreary years,  
The frantic carnival of hopes and fears,  
The wild waltz-music wailing through the  
    gloom,  
The slow death-agonies, the yawning tomb,  
The loved ones lost forever to our sight,  
In the wide waste of chaos and old night ;  
Earth's long, long dream of martyrdom and  
    pain ;  
No God in heaven to rend the welded chain  
Of endless evolution !

Is this *all*?

And mole-eyed "Science," gloating over bones,  
The skulls of monkeys and the Age of Stones,  
Blinks at the golden lamps that light the hall  
Of dusty death, and answers: "It is all."

1877.

### TO THE ANGEL OF DEATH.

THOU ancient Mystery ! thy solemn night, —  
Pierced by attempered rays from that far  
realm  
That lies beyond, dark with excess of light, —  
No more the shuddering spirit shall o'er-  
whelm.

No more thy charnel glooms the soul appall,  
Pale Azrael ! awful eidolon of Death ! —  
The dawn-light breaks athwart thy glimmering  
hall,  
And thy dank vapors own the morning's  
breath.

Too long the terror of the dread unknown  
Hath the wrung heart with hopeless anguish  
riven ;  
The blasting splendors of the fiery throne  
“ Burning within the inmost veil of  
Heaven ” —

The gloom of that great glory, which of old  
    Haunted the vision of the prophet's dream,  
When the archangel of the Lord foretold  
    The day of doom, by dark Hiddekel's stream.

In vain, through lingering years, I turned the  
    page  
    Rich with these sacred records of the past,  
Hope languished, and no legend could assuage  
    The rayless gloom thy awful shadow cast.

In dread apocalypse, I saw thee borne  
    On the pale steed, triumphant o'er the  
    doomed,  
Till the rent Heavens like a scroll were torn,  
    And hollow earth her hundred isles en-  
    tombbed.

In vain I questioned the cold stars, and kept  
    Lone vigils by the grave of buried love ;  
No angel wing athwart the darkness swept,  
    No voice vouchsafed my sorrow to reprove.

Was it the weight of that remorseless woe,  
    The lonely anguish of that long despair, —  
That made thy marble lips at length forego  
    Their silence at my soul's unceasing prayer ?

Henceforth, the sorrowing heart its pulse shall  
still

To solemn cadences of sweet repose,  
Content life's mystic passion to fulfill  
In the great calm that from thy promise flows.

Welcome as the white feet of those who bring  
Glad tidings of great joy unto the world,  
Shall fall the shadow of thy silver wing  
Over the weary couch of woe unfurled.

A heavenly halo kindles round thy brow ;  
Beyond the palms of Eden softly wave ;  
Bright messengers athwart the empyrean go,  
And love to love makes answer o'er the  
grave.

## THE PORTRAIT.

AFTER long years I raised the folds concealing  
That face, magnetic as the morning's beam :  
While slumbering memory thrilled at its revealing,  
Like Memnon wakening from his marble dream.

Again I saw the brow's translucent pallor,  
The dark hair floating o'er it like a plume ;  
The sweet, imperious mouth, whose haughty  
valor  
Defied all portents of impending doom.

Eyes planet calm, with something in their  
vision  
That seemed not of earth's mortal mixture  
born ;  
Strange mythic faiths and fantasies Elysian,  
And far, sweet dreams of "fairy lands forlorn."

Unfathomable eyes that held the sorrow  
Of vanished ages in their shadowy deeps,  
Lit by that prescience of a heavenly morrow  
Which in high hearts the immortal spirit  
keeps.

Oft has that pale, poetic presence haunted  
My lonely musings at the twilight hour,  
Transforming the dull earth-life it enchanted,  
With marvel and with mystery and with  
power.

Oft have I heard the sullen sea-wind moaning  
Its dirge-like requiems on the lonely shore,  
Or listening to the Autumn woods intoning  
The wild, sweet legend of the lost Lenore ;

Oft in some ashen evening of October,  
Have stood entranced beside a moldering  
tomb  
Hard by that visionary Lake of Auber,  
Where sleeps the shrouded form of Ulalume ;

Oft in chill, star-lit nights have heard the chim-  
ing  
Of far-off mellow bells on the keen air,  
And felt their molten-golden music timing  
To the heart's pulses, answering unaware.

Sweet, mournful eyes, long closed upon earth's  
sorrow

Sleep restfully after life's fevered dream !

Sleep, wayward heart ! till on some cool, bright  
morrow,

Thy soul, refreshed, shall bathe in morning's  
beam.

Though cloud and sorrow rest upon thy story,  
And rude hands lift the drapery of thy pall,  
Time, as a birthright, shall restore the glory,  
And Heaven rekindle all the stars that fall.

1870.

## THE VENUS OF MILO.

"When I entered for the last time that magnificent hall of the Louvre, where stands on her pedestal the ever-blessed goddess of beauty, our beloved Lady of Milo, the *diva* looked on me with a face of mournful and tender compassion."—HEINRICH HEINE.

GODDESS of dreams, mother of love and sorrow,  
Such sorrow as from love's fair promise flows,  
Such love as from love's martyrdoms doth borrow  
That conquering calm which only sorrow  
knows!—

Venus, Madonna! so serene and tender,  
In thy calm after-bloom of life and love,  
More fair than when of old thy sea-born splendor  
Surprised the senses of Olympian Jove!—

Not these the lips, that kindling into kisses,  
Poured subtile heats through Adon's languid frame,  
Rained on his sullen lips their warm caresses,  
Thrilled to his heart and turned its frost to  
flame.

Thy soul transcending passion's wild illusion,  
Its fantasy and fever and unrest,  
Broods tenderly in thought's devout seclusion,  
O'er some lost love-dream lingering in thy  
breast.

Thy face seems touched with pity for the anguish  
Of earth's disconsolate and lonely hearts ;  
For all the lorn and loveless lives that languish  
In solitary homes and sordid marts :

With pity for the faithlessness and feigning,  
The vain repentance and the long regret,  
The perfumed lamps in lonely chambers waning,  
The untouched fruits on golden salvers set :

With pity for the patient watchers yearning  
Through glimmering casements over midnight moors,  
Thrilled by the echo of far feet returning  
Through the blank darkness of the empty  
doors :

With sorrow for the coy, sweet buds that cherish  
In virgin pride love's luxury of gloom,

And in their fair unfolded beauty perish,  
Fading like flowers that knew not how to  
bloom :

With sorrow for the over-blown pale roses  
That yield their fragrance to the wandering  
air ;  
For all the penalties that life imposes  
On passion's dream, on love's divine despair.  
1868.

IN MEMORIAM.

How many Aprils have I roamed beside thee  
O'er the brown hills where now alone I  
tread?

And though far realms of wonder now divide  
thee

From our dim world, I cannot deem thee  
dead.

I held thee in my arms while life was failing, —  
Close in my arms and watched thy fluttering  
breath,

Till the red sunset in the west was paling  
And twilight veiled the awful calm of death.

In that white calm I saw then and forever  
The grandeur of thy spirit and its power;  
E'en as its mortal vestment seemed to sever,  
I saw the immortal bursting into flower.

That soul, so lofty in its isolation;  
So strong in weakness, resolute in pain;

So self-reliant in its reprobation  
Of servile arts and custom's iron reign ;

Mid alien crowds alone, with none to know  
thee,

With nothing left behind thee to regret,  
Save one sad heart that love's sweet debt doth  
owe thee,

One lonely heart that never can forget.

*April, 1878.*

## MY FLOWERS.

SWEET buds and berries gathered, far and wide,  
In haunted glens or wild sequestered ways ;  
By sun or starlight, — in the purple pride,  
Of Summer, or in Autumn's golden haze ; —  
Long have I held ye, clasped within my hands,  
Wooing your mystic odors to restore  
The sweet aroma of those flowery lands ; —  
The perfume of the days that are no more :  
Sad Autumn leaves, touched with the fatal  
glow  
Kindling athwart the forest's silent gloom,  
Farewell ! I fling ye on the way-side now,  
Where heedless feet may trample on your  
bloom ;  
For, through the silence and the o'ershadow-  
ing calm,  
Floats the far perfume of the Eden palm.



TRANSLATIONS.



## THE GARDEN MINSTER.

FROM THE FRENCH OF VICTOR HUGO.

How seems this garden, with its depths of  
shade

And verdurous, vaulted aisles, for worship  
made ;

Where every blossom bows its head in prayer,  
Or swings its censer on the silent air ;

Where the slow footsteps of the Summer Hours  
From dawn till dusk descend on opening flow-  
ers,

And, as they pass, with light and shade by  
turns,

Fill the cool hollows of the marble urns.

A holy rapture thrills me while I gaze

Up the blue heavens through the o'ershadow-  
ing maze ;

Or sit long hours in sweet monastic dreams,

Where o'er its rocky bed the river streams,

In the long grotto, dusky, cool and dim,

Where ivies cluster round the fountain's brim.

## THE ROUT OF THE CHILDREN.

FROM THE FRENCH OF VICTOR HUGO.

LITTLE darlings, return to my desolate room !  
Since I drove you away, it is mantled in  
    gloom ; —  
Since I drove you away, with rude, menacing  
    words ; —  
What harm had you done me, you dear little  
    birds ?  
Little rosy-lipped bandits ; — what Japanese  
    vase  
Did you dash into fragments ? — What picture  
    deface ?  
Ah, none : you but stopped in my study a minute,  
    ute,  
To plunder my desk of some papers within it —  
Some manuscript verses devoted to Fame ;  
Which you threw in the fire, and fanned to a  
    flame ;  
To see, as you said, how the wandering sparks  
Ran over the paper like lamp-lighted barques,

Or gleamed, as from window to window at night,  
One sees in the houses a vanishing light.

Then muttering vengeance, in menacing tone,  
I shouted, "Begone, imps, and leave me alone !  
You have burnt up my verses, entitled 'To  
Fame :'

I shall die, and the world never hear of my  
name."

Great loss then, indeed ! and great cause for  
dismay, —

A strophe, ill-born in the noise of your play !  
Great Bobadil verses that puffed as they went,  
And swaggered their impotent meanings to  
vent ;

And long Alexandrines, entangling their feet  
Like a pack of rude school-boys, let loose in  
the street.

You did but redeem from a fate more obscure  
The rhyme that some newspaper waited to  
lure

To that cavernous cell, called the poet's own  
nook,

Where no reader of newspapers pauses to look.  
For *this* have I raved ! Ah, I blush to recall  
How I sat, with my chair leaning back to the  
wall,

Still muttering vengeance, in menacing tone,  
And repeating "Begone, imps, and leave me  
alone!"

Alone! fine result, and great triumph! alone!  
Forgotten — forlorn, like a toad in a stone!  
And here have you left me, — my eye on the  
door,  
Grave, haughty, severe, — but you mind me no  
more;  
For without you have found all you sought to  
obtain, —  
All the freedom that here you had sighed for  
in vain, —  
The fresh air, the streamlet that runs through  
the grass,  
Where you fling in sweet blossoms and leaves  
as you pass;  
The breezes, the flowers, the perfumes divine, —  
Ah, this poem of God is far better than  
mine!  
You may pluck out the leaves of his book with-  
out fear,  
Nor tremble the voice of the tyrant to hear:—  
His roses and pinks you may rifle all day,  
Nor regret the dull room whence I drove you  
away.

As for me, all the joy of my day has departed ;  
I sit in my chair — half asleep, heavy hearted,  
While old Doctor Ennui, a Londoner, born  
Of fogs and the Thames on a December morn,  
Who waited to enter till you had gone out,  
Has moped in my study all day in a pout,  
And, usurping your corner, sits grouty and  
    grim,  
He gaping at me, and I gaping at him.

The pages I turned with such zeal to explore,  
The books and the manuscripts please me no  
    more :

I miss, o'er my shoulder, the sweet, peering  
    face,

I miss the small finger to point out the place,  
The nudge of the elbow, the sly little kiss,  
The brow full of candor, that always said  
    “ Yes,”

The great eyes of wonder, the frolicksome  
    screams,

The sweet humming voices that lapt me in  
    dreams.

Return little birds ! — since I drove you away  
I have lost all the sunshine and bloom of my  
    day.

Take my teacups, enameled with butterflies'  
wings, —

All my Dresden and Sèvres and beautiful  
things : —

You may twirl the round globe, the big map  
may unroll,

And sketch out new countries with crayon and  
coal.

My pictures and statues are waiting for you, —  
My vases of jasper and bright or-molu :

Of my corals and shells you may gather your  
fill,

And my malachite tables may mount at your  
will.

Your whooping and hiding, — to all I agree ;  
Your trooping and training are music to me.

Like heroes, returned from some great battle  
ground,

You may drag my old armchair in triumph  
around :

My great painted Bible may turn o'er and o'er, —  
That book you ne'er touched but with terror  
before, —

Where you see on the page, in fine colors dis-  
played,

*Dieu le père*, in an emperor's habit arrayed !

Then return, little doves ! to my desolate room ;  
Since I drove you away, it is mantled in  
gloom ; —

Oh, return ! you may ransack and rifle and  
reign,

So you will but forgive me, and love me again.

## THE LOST CHURCH.

FROM THE GERMAN OF UHLAND.

IN yonder dim and pathless wood  
Strange sounds are heard at twilight hour,  
And peals of solemn music swell,  
As from some minster's lofty tower.  
From age to age those sounds are heard,  
Borne on the breeze at twilight hour ;  
From age to age, no foot hath found  
A pathway to the minster's tower.

Late, wandering in that ancient wood,  
As onward through the gloom I trod,  
From all the woes and wrongs of earth  
My soul ascended to its God.  
When lo ! in the hushed wilderness  
I heard, far off, that solemn bell :  
Still heavenward as my spirit soared,  
Wilder and sweeter rang the knell.

While thus in holy musings rapt,  
My mind from outward sense withdrawn,  
Some power had caught me from the earth,  
And far into the heavens upborne —  
Methought a hundred years had passed,  
In mystic visions as I lay,  
When suddenly the parting clouds  
Seemed opening wide and far away.

No midday sun its glory shed, —  
The stars were shrouded from my sight, —  
And lo ! majestic o'er my head,  
A minster shone in solemn light.  
High through the lurid heavens it seemed  
Aloft, on cloudy wings, to rise,  
Till all its pointed turrets gleamed,  
Far flaming, through the vaulted skies ;

The bell, with full, resounding peal,  
Rang booming through the rocking tower :  
No hand had stirred its iron tongue,  
Slow swaying to the storm-wind's power.  
My bosom beating like a bark  
Dashed by the surging ocean's foam,  
I trod, with faltering, fearful joy,  
The mazes of the mighty dome.

A soft light through the oriel streamed,  
Like summer moonlight's golden gloom ;  
Far through the dusky arches gleamed,  
And filled with glory all the room.  
Pale sculptures of the sainted dead  
Seemed waking from their icy thrall,  
And many a glory-circled head  
Smiled sadly from the storied wall.

Low at the altar's foot I knelt,  
Transfixed with awe, and dumb with dread,  
For blazoned on the vaulted roof  
Were heaven's fiercest glories spread.  
Yet when I raised my eyes once more,  
The vaulted roof itself was gone ;  
Wide open was heaven's lofty door,  
And every cloudy veil withdrawn !

What visions burst upon my soul —  
What joys unutterable there,  
In waves on waves, forever roll  
Like music through the pulseless air —  
These never mortal tongue may tell :  
Let him who fain would prove their power  
Pause when he hears that solemn knell  
Float on the breeze at twilight hour.

## LEONORA.

FROM THE GERMAN OF BÜRGER.

FROM heavy dreams, sad Leonore  
Rose with the dawning day ;  
Her heart oppressed by boding fears  
At Wilhelm's long delay.  
With Frederic's force her soldier went  
To meet his country's foe ;  
And since, no tidings had he sent  
To tell of weal or woe.

The king and the proud empress-queen,  
Weary of endless war,  
At length renounce their fruitless strife  
And welcome peace once more.  
The weary, toil-worn warriors come,  
Rejoicing on their way ;  
With blare of trump and beat of drum,  
In oaken garlands gay.

And every way-side, every path,  
Is thronged with eager feet,  
Of friends and kindred, hurrying forth  
The coming host to meet.  
The lover greets his plighted bride ;  
But ah ! for poor Leonore, —  
No greeting to her pallid lips  
Shall bring the roses more.

She wandered up and down the road,  
To frantic fears a prey,  
And vainly questioned all that came,  
Throughout that weary day ;  
The army now had all passed by !  
She tore her raven hair,  
She threw herself upon the earth,  
In desolate despair.

The mother folds her to her heart,  
And seeks with counsels vain  
Some word of comfort to impart  
To soothe her darling's pain.  
“ Oh mother, what is lost is lost !  
Now Earth and Heaven may go.  
There is no pitying God in Heaven —  
No love for aught below.”

“Peace, peace! who know the Father’s love,  
Knows he can aid impart; —  
The blessed sacrament shall soothe  
Thy pierced and bleeding heart.”

“No balm upon this burning heart  
The sacrament can pour! —  
No sacrament to love and life  
The cold, cold dead restore.

“Oh mother, would my lamp of life  
Would sink in endless night!  
How shall I loathe the midnight gloom  
And loathe the morning light!  
And what, to me, is Heaven’s bliss.  
And what, to me, is Hell;  
With him, with him is happiness,  
And oh, without him, Hell!”

“Perchance, dear child, he loves no more,  
And wandering far and wide,  
Hath sought, upon a foreign shore,  
To wed a foreign bride.”

“Oh mother, what is lost is lost!  
There is no pitying love—  
No joy in life, no balm in death—  
No hope in Heaven above.

“Go out, life’s light, — forever out ;  
Die, die, in night and dread !  
There is no pitying God in Heaven ;  
Would, would that I were dead !”  
Thus raged the frenzy of despair  
Within her burning brain —  
Thus with God’s righteous providence  
She strove in anguish vain.

She beat her breast and tore her hair  
Till the long day was done, —  
Till in the West the silent stars  
Came twinkling one by one.  
She sat within her lonely room,  
Nor marked the dying day,  
Till the moon’s light, o’er tower and height,  
In silver glory lay.

When lo ! she hears a courser’s hoofs  
Ring on the frozen ground :  
A knight alights before the gate —  
His clanging arms resound.  
And hark ! a low and soft “kling ling”  
Sounds through the silent room !  
And hark ! a well known voice she hears  
Beside her in the gloom !

“What ho! Leonore: unbar the door;—  
Art watching or asleep?—

Doth my fair bride forget her vows,  
Or fear her vows to keep?”

“Ah Wilhelm, thou! so late at night?

Oh, I have watched and wept;  
What from thy Leonora’s side  
So long her love hath kept!”

“From far Hungarian fields I come

On my lone midnight ride,  
To bear thee to thy distant home;  
Away, away my bride!”

“The wind blows through the hawthorn bush;

In whistles loud and shrill;  
Come in, and warm thee in my arms;  
Ah! why so cold and still?”

“Let the wind through the hawthorn blow,

Or howl across the mere;  
The black horse paws, and clank the spurs,  
I dare not linger here.  
Come, don thy snow-white robes with speed,  
And swiftly mount behind;  
We ride a hundred leagues ere day,  
Our bridal bed to find!”

“And must we ride a hundred leagues  
To reach our bridal bower ?  
Hark ! even now, the booming bell  
Tolls out the midnight hour.”  
“Ha ! dost thou fear ? — the moon shines  
clear ;  
Soon will our course be sped !  
I bear thee to our bridal home  
And to our bridal bed.”

“Ah ! tell me where the bridal hall,  
And where the couch is spread ?”  
“Far, far from here ; cold, narrow, drear,  
Lies our low marriage bed !”  
“Hast room for me ?” “For thee and me ;  
Come, busk thee, darling bride ;  
The wedding guests are waiting,  
The door stands open wide.”

The maiden donned her bridal robes ;  
On the black steed she sprung,  
And round the knight her snowy arms  
In trembling silence flung.  
And on they gallop, fast and far,  
Nor mount nor stream their course can bar ;  
While horse and rider pant and blow ;  
The fire-sparks flashing as they go.

The crags shoot by, — the castles fly, —  
The rattling hoofs resound ;  
The bridges thunder 'neath their tread,  
And rings the hollow ground.  
“Ha! doth my Leonora fear  
With her true love to ride ?  
The midnight moon shines cold and clear —  
The dead ride swift, my bride !”

Hark ! wailings float upon the air,  
And hollow dirges ring !  
Why tolls the bell that solemn knell,  
Why flaps the raven's wing ?  
Lo, sweeping o'er the lonely moor,  
A dark funereal train !  
They chant a requiem o'er the bier, —  
A hoarse, sepulchral strain.

“Bury your dead when midnight's past,  
With wild lament and prayer ;  
To-night I wed a fearless bride,  
Our banquet ye shall share.  
Come, priest and choir, and mourners all,  
Come, crone the marriage song ;  
Come, priest, and bless the bridal bed,  
And join the merry throng.”

Now fades into the dusky air  
The coffin and the pall ;  
They sweep along, a ghostly throng,  
The mourners, priest, and all ;  
And faster, faster, still they speed,  
O'er wild morass and moonlight mead,  
While horse and rider pant and blow,  
The fire sparks flashing as they go !

How swiftly, on the right and left,  
The mountains hurry by ;  
How swiftly, on the right and left,  
Town, tower, and forest fly !  
“Doth my love fear ? the moon shines clear ;  
Ah ha ! dost fear the dead ?  
The dead ride swift, — hurrah ! hurrah !”  
“Ah, speak not of the dead !”

Now, where the moonbeams faintly fall,  
Yon frantic rabble see ;  
How fearfully they wheel and spin,  
Beneath the gallows-tree !  
“Halloo, halloo ! ye grisly crew,  
Come here, and follow me ;  
Around us prance a fetter-dance,  
And quit the gallows-tree.”

And now, across the moonlit waste,  
They hurry on behind ;  
A sound like dry and withered leaves,  
Low rustling in the wind.  
And onward, onward still they speed,  
Nor rock nor stock their course impede ;  
While horse and rider pant and blow,  
The fire-sparks flashing as they go !

Fast flies the quiet moonlight scene,  
Fast, fast and far, it flies ;  
Fast fly the fleecy clouds above,  
And fast the starry skies.  
“ Ah ! dost thou fear ?— the moon shines clear ;  
And fast the dead can ride.”  
“ Oh, name the dead no more ! ” “ Ah, ha !  
Dost fear the dead, my bride ?

“ Methinks I smell the morning air,  
And hark ! the cock doth crow !  
Then onward speed, my trusty steed !  
Haste, haste ! our sands run low.  
Our race is run, our course is done,  
And we are at the goal ;  
Swift ride the dead, — hurrah, hurrah !  
Come, priest, bind soul to soul ! ”

Up to a gloomy portal now,  
With slackened rein they ride ;  
When lo ! the massive bar and bolt  
Back from their staples glide.  
And as the dark and sounding door  
Upon its hinges turns,  
She sees, in the moon's glimmering light,  
Gray tombs and moldering urns.

Suddenly, from the rider's form,  
By some unearthly spell,  
The welded armor, piece by piece,  
In shivered fragments fell.  
She sees a hideous skeleton,  
A ghastly Horror, stand  
Before her glazing eyes revealed, —  
An hour-glass in his hand.

High reared the fiery, frantic steed,  
And trembled with affright ;  
Then sank into the yawning earth,  
And vanished from her sight !  
Wild howlings echoed through the air,  
And from the graves beneath ;  
While Leonora's throbbing heart  
Trembled 'twixt life and death.

Now round her, in the pallid light,  
The wheeling spectres fly,  
And, as they vanish from her sight,  
In hollow murmurs cry :  
“Repent ; nor doubt the Father’s love ;  
Submit to Heaven’s control :  
We yield thy body to the earth :  
May God receive thy soul.”

FROM GOETHE'S FAUST.

PART SECOND.

SCENE AT THE COURT OF THE EMPEROR.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

IT seems that everywhere on this dull earth  
Something is lacking ; — *here* of gold is dearth.  
'T is true we cannot sweep it from the floor,  
But wisdom can unfathomed depths explore.  
In mountain clefts and dungeons manifold,  
Are piles of minted and unminted gold,  
And I, by spiritual force and trust  
In mighty nature, can obtain the dust.

CHANCELLOR.

Nature and spirit ! — never Christian spake  
Such words as these. — We burn men at the  
stake  
For such profanities. Foul words and evil !  
Nature means sin, and spirit means the Devil ;

And, between both, is nursed the abortive  
brood

Whose monster heresies mankind delude.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

By this I see what wiseacres ye are ;  
What ye can handle not seems miles afar :  
What ye can grasp not is an empty shade ;  
What ye divine not must all search evade :  
That which ye have not poised in weight is  
stinted,  
And no coin current save what ye have minted.

## TO THE CLOUDS.

FROM THE GERMAN.

CLOUDS that sweep the midnight heaven,  
On your wild wings let me rove ;  
Leave me not with anguish riven,  
None who love me, — none to love.

Oft, my nightly vigils keeping,  
I have watched ye till the dawn ;  
Through the far blue heavens sweeping,  
On your snowy pinions borne.

Away, — away, forever speeding,  
Careless wanderers of the air, —  
Human joy or woe unheeding, —  
Ah, ye pause not at my prayer :

Leave, oh, leave me not in sadness, —  
Heavenly longings in my breast, —  
Bear me, on your wings of gladness,  
To the far home of my rest.

On the lonely hills of morning  
Breaks a red and lurid ray ;—  
Hide me, hide me from the dawning, —  
Fold me from the dreary day !

## THE DYING HEROES.

FROM THE GERMAN OF UHLAND.

THE valiant Danes drive back the Swedish  
host  
In wild confusion to the northern coast ;  
The sounding chariots clash, — the bright  
swords gleam,  
The broad, round shields flash back the moon's  
cold beam ;  
On the red corse-field, mid the fierce affray,  
Lies the young Sven and Ulf the warrior gray.

SVEN.

Alas ! my father, in the power and bloom  
Of life, grim Norna calls me to the tomb :  
In vain my mother, from the oaken bough,  
Weaves a bright garland for her warrior's  
brow ; —  
From her high tower my Edith looks in vain  
To see my chariot in the victor's train.

ULF.

In the gray night for thee her tears shall fall,  
Till visioned sleep thine image shall recall ;  
Yet mourn not thus : the path which thou hast  
    led,  
Though dark the way, she will not fear to  
    tread ;  
Soon shall she, smiling through her golden  
    hair,  
For thee at Odin's feast the bowl prepare.

SVEN.

No more the solemn chant my voice shall raise  
Amid our warrior youth on festal days ;  
The deeds of kings and heroes sing no more ;  
Their conquering arms, their fates in love and  
    war ;  
Through my neglected harp the wind shall sigh,  
And wake low dirges as it wanders by.

ULF.

High towers above us, like an eagle's nest,  
The bright Valhalla of our fathers' rest ;  
The stars roll under it, and, far below,  
Red meteors gleam and fiery comets glow ;—  
There, at the solemn feast, we meet again ;  
Lift up thy song to a triumphal strain !

SVEN.

Ah, heavy doom ! thus from the bright world  
torn, —

From life and love in youth's unhonored morn ;  
While yet no proud deed of the battle-field —  
No trophied arms, are sculptured on my shield :  
Twelve fearful judges sit enthroned on high ;  
How shall I shrink before each awful eye !

ULF.

One lofty deed their favor shall secure, —  
One deed whose rays no shadow can obscure ;  
Pours not thy young heart, on this barren  
strand,  
Its life-blood freely for our fatherland ?  
And see ! our foemen yield : — the clouds are  
riven !  
There lies our pathway to the halls of Heaven !

## THE COTTAGE.

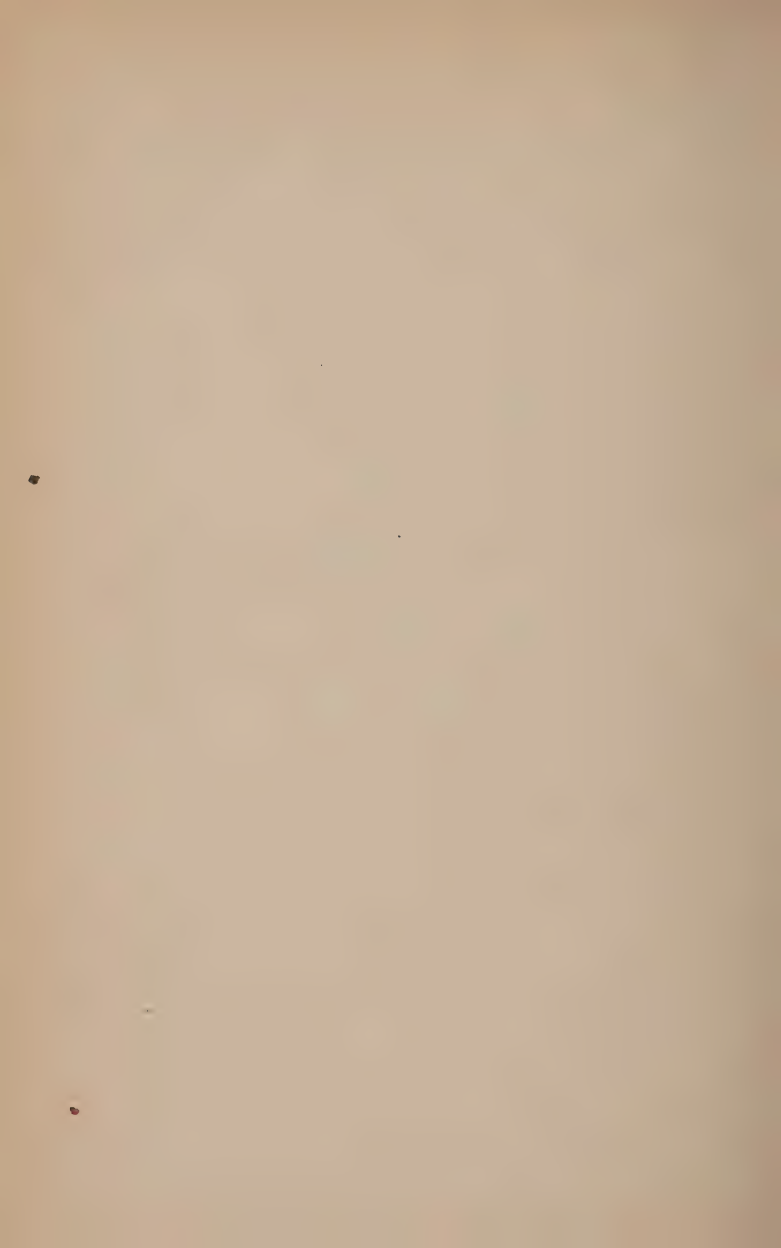
FROM THE GERMAN OF GLEIM.

I HAVE a cottage by the hill;  
It stands upon a meadow green;  
Behind it flows a murmuring rill,  
Cool-rooted moss and flowers between.

Beside the cottage stands a tree,  
That flings its shadow o'er the eaves;  
And scarce the sunshine visits me,  
Save when a light wind rifts the leaves.

A red-bird sings upon a spray,  
Through thè sweet summer-time, night-long,  
And evening travelers on their way  
Linger to hear her plaintive song.

Thou, maiden, with the yellow hair, —  
The winds of life are sharp and chill, —  
Wilt thou not seek a shelter there,  
In yon lone cottage by the hill?



CINDERELLA,  
AND  
THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

The two following Poems, written conjointly by Mrs. Whitman and her sister, Miss Susan Anna Power, appeared in Mrs Kirkland's "Union Magazine" in 1848, and were revised and reprinted in 1867.

## CINDERELLA.

“Pomp and feast and revelry,  
Masque and antique pageantry.”  
*L'Allegro.*

### PART I.

THE night was cold, the skies were bleak,  
The ways were dark and dreary,  
When Cinderella o'er the fire  
Sat hovering, worn and weary.  
Neglected in her childhood's home,  
She knew no mother's care,  
Condemned, in youthful loveliness,  
A menial's lot to share.

Her haughty sisters spend their days  
In splendor and parade;  
To ball and opera they go,  
To play and masquerade:  
And now, bedecked with gems and gold,  
In festal crowds they shone,  
While she beside the chimney nook  
Sat musing and alone.

The ruddy hearth-fires gleam and fade  
Upon the dusky wall,  
And on the oaken paneling  
Fantastic shadows fall.  
No sound is heard in all the house,  
So lonely now and drear,  
And e'en the cricket's drowsy song  
Falls faintly on her ear.

There pensive by the hearth she sat  
And watched the flickering fire,  
Nor saw that close beside her stood  
A dame in rich attire.  
When, lo ! upon her startled gaze  
A matchless splendor broke,  
As thus, in thrilling words and low,  
The radiant fairy spoke : —

“No longer shalt thou moping sit,  
Oppressed with gloom and care,  
But at the royal banquet shine  
The fairest of the fair.  
Go, search, and by the garden wall  
A pompion thou shalt find,  
And lo ! a chariot shall arise  
From out its golden rind !

“Down in the cellar’s darkest nook  
A rat-trap shalt behold,  
Whose narrow space doth stable steeds  
Of more than mortal mold !  
Behind the moss-grown garden well  
Six lizards thou shalt see ;  
These, with the pompion and the trap,  
Go quickly bring to me.”

And now she sees with wondering awe  
Six powdered footmen stand,  
Six mice transformed to stately steeds  
Beneath the fairy’s wand !  
At length a glittering car arose  
From out the pompion’s rind,  
While blazing torches flamed before  
And footmen swung behind !

Lo ! Cinderella’s tattered garb,  
With dust and ashes strown,  
Touched by the fairy’s magic wand,  
With pearls and diamonds shone !  
All woven woof of mortal loom  
Her vesture did surpass,  
And on her little feet were seen  
Two slippers framed of glass !

“Now,” said the fairy, “mount thy car  
And to the palace speed,  
But as you prize my fairy gifts,  
My parting counsel heed :  
Shouldst thou within the castle gates  
Outstay the midnight hour,  
Thy gorgeous robes to tatters turn,  
My spell hath lost its power.”

She said : — the fiery coursers prance,  
Their rattling hoofs resound,  
With tossing heads and flying manes  
They clear the frozen ground.  
The Prince (informed some noble dame  
Arrives in matchless state),  
With all his royal retinue,  
Receives her at the gate.

With courtly grace the startled child  
He up the staircase hands,  
And now within the blazing hall  
Sweet Cinderella stands.  
Soon as she stept within the door  
The music ceased to sound,  
And on the softly perfumed air  
A murmur floats around.

Before her nobles bent the knee,  
And courtly dames caressed,  
While foremost in the glittering throng  
Her haughty sisters pressed.  
Amid the glittering throng she stood  
Like some wild woodland flower,  
Blushing at her own loveliness,  
And trembling at its power.

The Prince, enamored, claimed her hand  
And bore her to the dance,  
And oft amid its mazy rings  
She sought her sisters' glance.  
At length upon the castle clock  
She chanced to turn her eye  
And starts to see upon its face  
The hour of midnight nigh !

Then, swiftly as a falling star  
Shoots through the gloom of night,  
She sprang into her airy car  
And vanished from their sight.  
And now of all her splendor reft  
And all her rich attire,  
She takes her solitary place  
Beside the smoldering fire.

But soon she hears a thundering knock  
    Resounding through the hall ; —  
The sisters all come rushing in,  
    Enraptured with the ball.  
All talk at once and all descant  
    Upon the unknown guest,  
And tell of all the courtesies  
    She showed them at the feast.

They say that court and city now  
    Are ringing with her fame.  
The Prince has offered countless sums  
    To learn the stranger's name.  
Fair Cinderella, wild with joy,  
    Seems little heed to take,  
She only yawns and rubs her eyes  
    As if but half awake.

At length she said, " Ah, sisters dear,  
    Might I but only go,  
To-morrow night, in pearl and white,  
    With you to see the show ? "  
" In pearl and white, you little fright !  
    A figure you would cut !  
How would your pearl and white agree  
    With cinders and with smut ? "

“Then would my sister Charlotte, dear,  
But only give me leave  
To wear the yellow satin dress  
She wore on Christmas eve ?”  
“Lend you my satin dress, indeed !  
But understand at once  
That courts and balls are not for such  
As you, you little dunce !”

## PART II.

Again the palace halls are thronged  
With many a noble guest,  
And Cinderella, lovelier still,  
Is there among the rest.  
So fast the golden moments fly  
In rapture and delight,  
She soon forgets to count the hours  
Nor heeds their rapid flight.

But, hark ! at length the castle clock  
Sounds from its lofty tower ;  
She starts to hear it, stroke by stroke,  
Toll forth the midnight hour.

She fled across the marble floor  
Fleet as the mountain wind,  
But, tripping at the door, she left  
One shining shoe behind.

There, gleaming like a diamond spark,  
The little slipper lies,  
Dropped like a star-flake in the path  
Where some swift meteor flies.  
Breathless she gains the castle court,  
In terror and dismay,  
With naught of all her splendor left  
Nor all her rich array.

Her rich array, to tatters turned,  
Hangs fluttering in the wind ;  
The mice run scampering on before,  
The pompion rolls behind !  
The guards that round the portal wait,  
With startled eyes, behold  
A vagrant leave the palace gate  
And cross the moonlit wold.

And wondering menials stare to see  
The little beggar pass,  
For nought of all her pomp remains  
Except one shoe of glass.

Next day the herald's trump did sound  
Proclaiming far and wide  
That whosoe'er could wear the shoe  
Should be the Prince's bride !

From street to street, from house to house,  
The glittering prize they bear,  
But ne'er a lady in the land  
That little shoe could wear.  
'T was midnight ere they reached the door  
Where Cinderella dwelt,  
Who vainly strove to veil her heart  
And hide the joy she felt.

The sisters rushed into the hall  
And sought, with vain ado,  
To press and pinch and crowd their feet  
Into the fairy shoe.  
Till Cinderella, all the while  
Demurely standing by,  
Now on the royal messenger  
Cast an appealing eye.

The mute request with curling lip  
The tittering sisters see,  
But soon to wonder and amaze  
Was turned their scornful glee.

With perfect ease she slides her foot  
Into the fairy shoe,  
Then, blushing, from her folded vest  
Its little partner drew.

When, lo ! soft music filled the air,  
Resplendent lustre shone ;  
The fairy comes to claim her charge  
And lead her to a throne.  
And " Ne'er forget, my child," she said,  
" In sorrow's darkest hour  
That unseen guardians still are nigh  
To aid thee with their power :

" And often in yon glittering court  
Recall my last behest,  
For pleasure's self pursued too far  
Shall lose its sweetest zest.  
Then count the moments as they pass  
And heed their warning chime,  
Nor ever in life's mazy dance  
Forget the flight of time."

## THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

“ A tale of forests and enchantments drear.” *Il Penseroso.*

Sister, 't is the noon of night! —  
Let us, in the web of thought,  
Weave the threads of ancient song,  
From the realms of Fairie brought.

Thou shalt stain the dusky warp  
In nightshade wet with twilight dew ;  
I, with streaks of morning gold,  
Will strike the fabric through and through.

### PART I.

WHERE a lone castle by the sea  
Upreared its dark and moldering pile,  
Far seen, with all its frowning towers,  
For many and many a weary mile ;

The wild waves beat the castle walls  
And bathed the rock with ceaseless showers,  
The winds roared hoarsely round the pile,  
And moaned along its moldering towers.

Within those wide and echoing halls,  
To guard her from a fatal spell,

A maid, of noble lineage born,  
Was doomed in solitude to dwell.

With portents dark and omens dire,  
The orphan's natal day began,  
As warring destinies conspire  
Her charmed life to bless or ban.

Four Fairies graced the infant's birth  
With fame and beauty, wealth and power ;  
A fifth, by one fell stroke, reversed  
The magic splendors of her dower :

If e'er a spindle's shining steel  
Should pierce the maiden's lily hand,  
A solemn trance her eyes should seal  
In sleep's forlorn, enchanted land :

A hundred years her soul should stray  
In far-off shadow-lands of dream,  
Till, warm beneath love's kindling ray,  
It opened to the morning's beam.

In olden times the tale had birth,  
By wandering minstrels told of yore,  
Whose names have perished from the earth, —  
Whose legends live in fairy lore.

The wild waves beat the castle wall,  
And bathed the rock with ceaseless showers ;  
Dark, heaving billows plunge and fall  
In whitening foam beneath the towers.

There, rocked by winds and lulled by waves,  
In youthful grace the maiden grew,  
And from her solitary dreams  
A sweet and pensive pleasure drew.

Yet often, from her lattice high,  
She gazed athwart the gathering night  
To mark the sea-gulls wheeling by,  
And longed to follow in their flight.

One winter night, beside the hearth  
She sat and watched the smoldering fire,  
While now the tempest seemed to lull,  
And now the winds rose high and higher,

Strange sounds are heard along the wall,  
Dim faces glimmer through the gloom,  
And still mysterious voices call,  
And shadows flit from room to room :

Till, bending o'er the dying brands,  
She chanced a sudden gleam to see ;

She turned the sparkling embers o'er,  
And lo ! she finds a golden key !

Lured on, as by an unseen hand,  
She roamed the castle o'er and o'er, —  
Through many a darkling chamber sped,  
And many a dusky corridor :

And still, through unknown, winding ways  
She wandered on for many an hour,  
For gallery still to gallery leads,  
And tower succeeds to tower.

Of, wearied with the steep ascent,  
She lingered on her lonely way,  
And paused beside the pictured walls,  
Their countless wonders to survey.

At length, upon a narrow stair  
That wound within a turret high,  
She saw a little low-browed door,  
And turned, her golden key to try ;

Slowly, beneath her trembling hand,  
The bolts recede, and, backward flung,  
With harsh recoil and sullen clang,  
The door upon its hinges swung.

There, in a little moonlit room,  
She sees a weird and withered crone,  
Who sat and spun amid the gloom,  
And turned her wheel with drowsy drone.

With mute amaze and wondering awe,  
A passing moment stood the maid,  
Then, entering at the narrow door,  
More near the mystic task surveyed.

She saw her twine the flaxen fleece,  
She saw her draw the flaxen thread,  
She viewed the spindle's shining point,  
And, pleased, the novel task surveyed.

A sudden longing seized her breast  
To twine the fleece, — to turn the wheel:  
She stretched her lily hand, and pierced  
Her finger with the shining steel !

Slowly her heavy eyelids close,  
She feels a drowsy torpor creep  
From limb to limb, till every sense  
Is locked in an enchanted sleep.

A dreamless slumber, deep as night,  
In deathly trance her senses locked.

At once, through all its massive vaults  
And gloomy towers, the castle rocked.

The beldame roused her from her lair,  
And raised on high a mournful wail, —  
A shrilly scream that seemed to float  
A requiem on the dying gale.

“A hundred years shall pass,” she said,  
“Ere those blue eyes behold the morn, —  
Ere these deserted halls and towers  
Shall echo to a bugle-horn ;

“A hundred Norland winters pass,  
While drenching rains and drifting snows  
Shall beat against the castle walls,  
Nor wake thee from thy long repose.

“A hundred times the golden grain  
Shall wave beneath the harvest moon,  
Twelve hundred moons shall wax and wane  
Ere yet thine eyes behold the sun !”

She ceased ; but still the mystic rhyme  
The long-resounding aisles prolong,  
And all the castle's echoes chime  
In answering cadence to her song.

She bore the maiden to her bower,  
An ancient chamber, wide and low,  
Where golden sconces from the wall  
A faint and trembling lustre throw ;

A silent chamber, far apart,  
Where strange and antique arras hung,  
That waved along the moldering walls,  
And in the gusty night-wind swung.

She laid her on her ivory bed,  
And gently smoothed each snowy limb,  
Then drew the curtain's dusky fold  
To make the entering daylight dim.

## PART II.

And all around, on every side,  
Throughout the castle's precincts wide,  
In every bower and hall,  
All slept : the warder in the court,  
The figures on the arras wrought,  
The steed within his stall.

No more the watch-dog bayed the moon,  
The owlet ceased her boding tune,  
The raven on his tower,  
All, hushed in slumber still and deep,  
Enthralled in an enchanted sleep,  
Await the appointed hour.

A pathless forest, wild and wide,  
Engirt the castle's inland side,  
And stretched for many a mile ;  
So thick the deep, impervious screen,  
Its topmost towers were dimly seen  
Above the moldering pile.

So high the ancient cedars sprung,  
So far aloft their branches flung,  
So close the covert grew,  
No foot its silence could invade,  
No eye could pierce its depths of shade,  
Or see the welkin through.

Yet oft, as from some distant mound,  
The traveler cast his eyes around  
O'er wold and woodland gray,  
He saw, as by the glimmering light  
Of moonbeams, on a misty night,  
A castle far away.

All desolate and drear it stood  
Within the wild and tangled wood,  
    'Mid gloomy foss and fell ;  
And oft the maiden's form did seem  
To mingle with a champion's dream,  
    As Gothic legends tell.

Long ere the hundred years had passed,  
Brave knights, with vigil and with fast,  
    Essayed to break the thrall ;  
Till, in the old romantic time  
Of minstrel and Provençal rhyme,  
    And Amadis de Gaul,

A paladin from holy land,  
With helm and hauberk, spear and brand,  
    And high, untarnished crest,  
By visions of enchantment led,  
Hath vowed the magic maze to tread,  
    And break her charmèd rest.

As in the Valley of St. John,  
The bold de Vaux defied alone  
    The mighty elfin powers,  
And sought to gain the enchanted mound,  
And break the spell that darkly bound  
    Its battlements and towers, —

So, like that knight of Triermain,  
He came through Saracenic Spain  
    O'er deserts waste and wide ;  
No dangers daunt, no toils can tire ;  
With throbbing heart and soul on fire  
    He seeks his sleeping bride.

He gains the old, enchanted wood,  
Where never mortal footsteps trod,  
    He pierced its tangled gloom ;  
A chillness loads the lurid air,  
Where baleful swamp-fires gleam and glare  
    His pathway to illume.

Well might the warrior's courage fail,  
Well might his lofty spirit quail,  
    On that enchanted ground ;  
No open foeman meets him there,  
But, borne upon the murky air,  
    Strange horror broods around !

At every turn his footsteps sank  
'Mid tangled boughs and mosses dank,  
    For long and weary hours, —  
Till issuing from the dangerous wood,  
The castle full before him stood,  
    With all its flanking towers !

The moon a paly lustre sheds ;  
Resolved, the grass-grown court he treads ;  
    The gloomy portal gained,  
He crossed the threshold's magic bound,  
He paced the hall, where all around  
    A deathly silence reigned.

No fears his venturous course could stay, —  
Darkling he groped his dreary way, —  
    Up the wide staircase sprang :  
It echoed to his mailed heel ;  
With clang of arms and clash of steel  
    The silent chambers rang.

He sees a glimmering taper gleam  
Far off, with faint and trembling beam,  
    Athwart the midnight gloom :  
Then first his soul confessed a fear,  
As with slow footsteps drawing near,  
    He gained the lighted room.

And now the waning moon was low,  
The perfumed tapers faintly glow,  
    And, by their dying gleam,  
He raised the curtain's dusky fold,  
And lo ! his charmed eyes behold  
    The lady of his dream !

As violets peep from wintry snows,  
Slowly her heavy lids unclosed,  
    And gently heaves her breast ;  
But all unconscious was her gaze,  
Her eye with listless languor strays  
    From brand to plumed crest :

A rising blush begins to dawn  
Like that which steals at early morn  
    Across the eastern sky ;  
And slowly, as the morning broke,  
The maiden from her trance awoke  
    Beneath his ardent eye !

As the first kindling sunbeams threw  
Their level light athwart the dew,  
    And tipped the hills with flame,  
The silent forest-boughs were stirred  
With music, as from bee and bird  
    A mingling murmur came.

From out its depths of tangled gloom  
There came a breath of dewy bloom.  
    And, from the valleys dim,  
A cloud of fragrant incense stole,  
As if each violet breathed its soul  
    Into that floral hymn.

Loud neighed the steed within his stall,  
The cock crowed on the castle wall,  
    The warder wound his horn ;  
The linnet sang in leafy bower,  
The swallows, twittering from the tower,  
    Salute the rosy morn.

But fresher than the rosy morn,  
And blither than the bugle-horn,  
    The maiden's heart doth prove,  
Who, as her beaming eyes awake,  
Beholds a double morning break, —  
    The dawn of light and love !

1848.















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